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MARIE STUART

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Mary Stuart
Queen of Scots

BY

ALEXANDRE DUMAS

TRANSLATED BY

J. M. HOWELL

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MARY STUART,

QUEEN OF SCOTS.

PART FIRST.

THERE are some names which, when borne by those of royal blood, seemed predestined to misfortune. In France the name of Henri is ill-omened. Henri I. was poisoned, Henri II. was killed in a tournament, Henri III. and Henri IV. were assassinated, and God alone knows what fate has in reserve for Henri V., on whom misfortune has already laid a heavy hand.

In Scotland the name of Stuart is regarded as a synonym for sorrow and calamity. Robert I., founder of the race, died of a decline at twenty-eight. Robert II., happiest of the family, spent part of his life in retirement and darkness, being afflicted with an inflammation of the eyes which kept them constantly suffused with blood. Robert

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III. sank under the poignant sorrow caused by the loss of one of his sons and the captivity of the other. James I. was murdered, James II. was killed at the siege of Roxburgh by the explosion of a cannon, James III. was assassinated by an unknown person in a mill where he had taken refuge after the battle of Saucheburn. James IV., wounded by two arrows and a blow from a halberd, perished on Flodden Field. James V. died of grief over the loss of his sons and remorse at having caused the execution of Patrick Hamilton. James VI., who wore the double crown of Scotland and England, dragged out a sickly, timorous existence between the scaffolds of his unhappy mother, Mary Stuart, and of his unfortunate son, Charles I. Charles II. spent part of his life in exile, and James II. died there. The Chevalier Saint George, having been proclaimed rightful king of England, Scotland, and Ireland by Louis IV., made an effort to regain his lost kingdom, but was obliged to flee from Great Britain ere he had struck a single blow. His son Charles Edward also attempted to regain the throne, but was defeated at Culloden, and forced to flee for his life with a high price on his head; he was hunted from mountain to mountain,

from rock to rock, until at last, after many romantic adventures, he succeeded in escaping to a French vessel and reached the Continent; he finally went to Florence, where he died at the age of sixty-eight, without being recognized as a sovereign by the European powers. Lastly, Henry Benedict, brother of Charles Edward, and the last descendant of the house of Stuart, lived upon a pension of three thousand pounds sterling from the English crown and died in obscurity in 1807, bequeathing to the house of Hanover, as a tardy but complete acknowledgment of the legitimacy of the family which had supplanted his own, the crown jewels which James II. had carried to the Continent when he was expelled from the throne.

Of all this unfortunate race, Mary Stuart was the most unhappy. Brantôme, who knew her at one of the saddest periods of her life, when she was leaving France, said that "those who desire to write of the illustrious Queen of Scotland have two fruitful subjects upon which to discourse—her life and her death."

On the 9th of August, 1561, after the deaths of her husband and mother, Mary Stuart, Queen of Scotland and Queen Dowager of France, left

Paris to return to her own rough and turbulent country. She was accompanied upon her journey to Calais by her uncles, the Cardinals of Guise and Lorraine, the Duc and Duchesse de Guise, the Duc d'Aumale, M. de Nemours, and a large suite, among whom were MM. d'Elbœuf, Damville, Brantôme, and Chatelard. The young Queen tarried a week at Calais, but at last, after a sorrowful parting from her family, she embarked upon the 15th of August on a galley commanded by M. de Mévillon and set sail for Scotland. Mary Stuart was then just nineteen and in the full flower of her beauty, a beauty so marvellous that few were able to resist its charms and many became its victims.

As the royal galley was leaving the harbor, the Queen heard wild shrieks and cries for aid, and rushing forward, she beheld a vessel under full sail, which, through the ignorance of its pilot, had struck upon a rock in such fashion as to be almost cut in twain, and was rapidly sinking. Pale and dumb with horror, she watched the vessel founder, while its unhappy crew made desperate efforts to save themselves by climbing up the shrouds and onto the yards, anxious to prolong

their lives by even a few instants. The appalling spectacle lasted but a few moments; then hull, masts, yards, and all were engulfed in the sea's yawning maw. A black speck appeared here and there upon the surface of the sea, but one by one they vanished, and as the last man disappeared beneath the waves the Queen sank trembling and weeping into the arms of her attendants, crying: "Oh, my God! what an omen for such a voyage!" When she had recovered somewhat, she seated herself on deck and remained looking back at the slowly receding shores of the country she loved, weeping and murmuring: "Farewell, France! Farewell!"

At evening the sorrowful Queen was still lamenting and striving to pierce the gathering gloom, but little by little all objects became obscure, and she finally yielded to the solicitations of her ladies and went down to supper; as she reached the companionway she turned and said: "Now, beloved France, I do indeed lose thee, for cruel night heaps mourning on mourning and blinds me with a black veil. Farewell, dear land! Alas, I shall never see thee again!" She then observed that she was the opposite of Dido, who,

after Æneas' departure, did naught but gaze on the sea, whereas she could not take her eyes from the land.

During supper her ladies and gentlemen did their utmost to console her and distract her thoughts, but it was all in vain; the poor Queen could not forget her grief nor banish a presentiment of coming trouble. Tears blinded and sobs choked her, and, unable to respond to her companions' friendly endeavors, she soon left the table; after ordering a bed prepared for her in the after-cabin, she summoned the helmsman and commanded him to waken her at daybreak if the coast of France was still visible. Fortune favored her, for the wind died away and at dawn the ship was still in sight of France. Faithful to his orders, the helmsman awakened the Queen, and from the open port-hole she once more looked upon the land of her affection; but toward five o'clock the wind freshened, the ship gathered headway, and the last faint headlands disapppeared below the horizon. Then Mary, pale as death, fell back upon her pillow, crying again: "Farewell, France! Farewell, land of my happy days. I have looked upon thee for the last time."

It was in truth in the country which it so grieved her to leave that Mary Stuart spent the only happy years of her life. Born near the bedside of her dying father, in a gloomy and critical time for royalty in Scotland, the shadow which fell upon her cradle darkened her entire life, and the years she passed in France were her only bright ones. From birth she was calumniated, for it was current that she was deformed and could not live. Angry at this malicious report and determined to crush it, Mary de Guise one day undressed the infant princess and showed her naked to the English ambassador, who had asked her hand on behalf of King Henry VIII. for the Prince of Wales, who was himself but five years old. Crowned at the age of nine months by Cardinal Beaton, Archbishop of St. Andrews, she was immediately afterwards secluded in Sterling Castle, where she was carefully guarded by her mother, who feared treachery on the part of the English king. Two years later, not thinking Sterling a secure retreat, the regent removed the royal child to an island in Lake Menteith, where an isolated monastery sheltered her and four little girls who were born in the same year as herself, and like her bore the sweet

name of Mary, which in French (*Marie*) forms the anagram of the verb to love (*aimer*). These maidens were known as the "Queen's Marys," and were destined to be her companions through good and evil fortune. They were Mary Beaton, Mary Seaton, Mary Fleming, and Mary Livingston. In this secluded and lonely spot the little Queen resided, until, the Scottish Parliament having approved her marriage with the Dauphin, she was taken to Dumbarton Castle to await a propitious moment for her journey to France, and it was there that she was confided to the care of M. de Brézé, who had been sent by Henri II. to escort her to Paris.

The ship which bore the little Queen and her maids to France bore also three of James V.'s natural sons, and among them the Prior of St. Andrews, James Stuart, who was destined to abjure the faith of his race, and under the titles of Earl of Murray and Regent of Scotland to bring misery and death upon his sister and rightful sovereign. Although hotly pursued by the English fleet, the vessel which carried the royal bride succeeded in reaching Brest on the 15th of August, 1548. From Brest Mary went to St. Germain-en-

MARIE STUART AND RIZZIO

Laye, where Henri II., who had just ascended the throne, welcomed her affectionately, showered gifts and caresses upon her, and then sent her to a convent where daughters of the noblest houses of France received their education. There Mary's mind developed rapidly; born with a woman's heart and a man's intellect, she acquired with marvellous ease not only the accomplishments which then constituted the principal education of a princess, but also the exact sciences which supposedly fell only within the province of learned doctors. At the age of fourteen she delivered a Latin discourse of her own composition before Henri II., Catherine de Médicis, and the assembled court, in which she maintained that women should receive a liberal education in the sciences and literature, and that it was unjust and tyrannical to restrict them to elementary studies and accomplishments. One can readily understand that a future queen who upheld such advanced opinions was enthusiastically received by the most literary and pedantic court of Europe. Between the literature of Rabelais and Marot, which was on the wane, and that of Ronsard and Montaigne, which had almost reached its apogee, Mary became the queen of poetry, and she

would have been quite content to wear no other crown than that of flowers, which Ronsard, Debellay, Maison-Fleur, and Brantôme daily placed upon her fair young head; but alas, fate willed otherwise, and in the midst of the fêtes whose object was the resuscitation of chivalry came that fatal joust at Les Tournelles. Henri II., wounded in the eye by a lance, was prematurely laid beside his ancestors, and Mary Stuart ascended the throne of France. A year later she mourned her mother, and ere her tears were dry she was called upon to lament the loss of her royal spouse.

"She was then," says Brantôme, "most beautiful to behold; the pure white of her skin struggled for supremacy with the whiteness of her veil, and the latter, being man's handiwork, was forced to yield the palm to the snowy pallor of her cheeks. I never saw her otherwise than pale," he continues, "during all the time that I had the honor to make one of her suite, first in France and later in Scotland, whither she was forced to go to pacify her kingdom, which was torn by religious strife. Poor lady, she had no desire to go thither, and I often heard her say that she dreaded the journey like death itself; she would far have preferred remain-

ing in France as a simple queen dowager with Touraine and Poitou for her dowry, but Messieurs her uncles advised her going to rule over her savage country and even urged her to do so. Alas! afterward they bitterly repented their inconsistency."

As we have seen, Mary followed her uncles' advice, and her voyage began under such melancholy auspices that when she lost sight of France she thought to die of grief, and it was then that these well-known lines were penned:

"Adieu, plaisant pays de France,
O ma patrie,
La plus chérie,
Qui as nourri ma jeune enfance.
Adieu, France! adieu, mes beau jours!
La nef qui disjoint nos amours
N'a eu de moi que la moitié:
Une part te reste, elle est tienne;
Je la fie à ton amitié,
Pour que de l'autre il te souvienne."

This part of herself which she left in France was the body of the young king, who carried all her happiness with him to the tomb.

Mary's last hope was that her little squadron might sight the English fleet and be compelled to

return, but a fog of extraordinary density for the season enveloped the Channel from early Sunday morning until eight o'clock on Monday, and enabled the little fleet to elude the English cruisers. When the fog lifted, Captain de Mévillon, who had steered blindly, discovered that he was in the midst of such a wilderness of reefs that one or more of his vessels must have perished had the fog endured a few moments longer; recognizing that portion of the Scottish coast of which he was abreast, he steered his vessels through the reefs with great ability and piloted his ships safely into the port of Leith. No preparations had been made for the Queen's reception, but on learning of her arrival the dignitaries of the town hastened to welcome and pay her homage and to make arrangement for the continuance of her journey to Edinburgh. When the Queen saw the miserable beast with its shabby saddle which was to be her mount, the half-starved donkeys which were to bear her suite, and the rough men who formed the escort, she could not restrain her tears; visions of the beautiful palfreys with splendid housings, the richly garbed cavaliers mounted on superb steeds, and the well-equipped escorts of France passed

before her swimming eyes. On the day she landed the poverty of her kingdom was revealed, and on the following she beheld its ferocity.

After a sleepless night at Holyrood, during which, Brantôme tells us, five or six hundred of Edinburgh's roughest inhabitants surrounded the castle and serenaded the Queen with an orchestra of wretched violins and rebecs, Mary desired to hear mass and repaired to the royal chapel. Unfortunately, the majority of the city's population was of the reformed religion, and, enraged that the Queen should inaugurate her reign by this proof of loyalty to Catholicism, they forced their way into the church, armed with knives, stones, and clubs, and avowed their intentions of murdering the poor priest who was her chaplain. A scene of indescribable tumult ensued; the frightened priest fled from the altar and took refuge behind her Majesty, around whom the four Marys gathered in fear and trembling, while the Queen's brother, the Prior of St. Andrews, who, like many ecclesiastics of the time, was a better soldier than priest, seized a sword and, placing himself between Mary and the mob, swore that he would kill the first man who advanced another

step. The Prior's courage and firmness combined with the Queen's dignified and dauntless demeanor cooled the Reformers' zeal, and they gradually retreated.

As has already been stated, Mary Stuart returned to her kingdom when the religious controversy between the Church of Rome and the Calvinists was at its height. A zealous Catholic, like all her mother's family, her presence in Scotland caused great anxiety to the Protestants, and a rumor spread that instead of disembarking at Leith, as she had been obliged to do because of the fog, she was to have landed at Aberdeen and to have met the Earl of Huntley—one of the peers who had remained faithful to the Catholic Church, and who, after the Hamiltons, was the most powerful ally of the house of Stuart. It was said that, backed by the Earl and twenty thousand men from the Highlands, the Queen intended to march upon Edinburgh and forcibly establish a Catholic faith throughout Scotland; events, however, soon demonstrated the falsity of this report.

Mary was exceedingly fond of James Stuart, Prior of St. Andrews, who was the natural son of her father, James V., by a descendant of the house

of Mar. This lady, despite her well-known liaison with the King and the son which she had borne him, had married Lord Douglas of Lochleven, by whom she had two other sons, William and George Douglas, who were, therefore, the Prior's half-brothers. Mary was scarcely seated upon the throne of Scotland before she bestowed upon the Prior the Earldoms of Mar and Murray, the former title being that of his maternal ancestors and the latter having been extinct since the death of the famous Thomas Randolph.

Unluckily, James Stuart was not a man to rest content with barren honors. Having the titles, he coveted the lands pertaining to them, which had reverted to the crown when the male succession of the ancient earls became extinct, and which had, little by little, been appropriated by the powerful nobles upon whose estates they bordered. The Earl of Huntley had seized upon much of this crown property, and Mary, realizing that he would opppose the bestowal of it upon her brother, determined to see the Earl herself. Under pretext of visiting her possessions in the north, she journeyed thither escorted by a small army commanded by the newly created Earl of Mar and

Murray. The Earl of Huntley was not deceived by the apparent reason for this expedition, as his son, John Gordon, had just been sentenced to a term of imprisonment for some trivial abuse of authority; nevertheless, he showed all respect to the Queen, sending messengers to invite her to rest at his castle and hastening in person to meet her and place his house at her disposition. Unhappily, Mary reached Inverness before the Earl, and the governor, who was one of his retainers, refused her entrance to the castle, although it was a royal residence. Murray, convinced that it was useless to temporize with such rebellious subjects, ordered the governor's execution, and he was beheaded for high treason on the day previous to Huntley's arrival.

This display of firmness convinced the Earl that the young Queen did not intend her nobles to exercise the almost sovereign rights which her father had permitted them to arrogate, and, learning that his son had escaped from prison and placed himself at the head of his vassals, he feared that he would be suspected of being privy to the act—as doubtless he was—and despite the kindly reception which Mary accorded him he secretly departed

from Inverness and hastened to the command of his soldiers, determined, as her Majesty's escort numbered only six or seven thousand men, to risk a battle. He claimed, however, as Buccleuch did when he attempted to wrest James V. from the hands of the Douglas, that he did not war against the Queen but against the Regent, who influenced her unduly and frustrated all her good intentions.

Murray, knowing that a peaceful reign depends greatly upon the firmness displayed at its inception, immediately convoked all the neighboring nobles to take the field against the insurgents, and as the house of Gordon was already too powerful all responded to his summons. It soon became apparent, however, that although the lesser nobles hated and feared Huntley, they entertained no great affection for the Queen, that they had not come to her assistance through loyalty, and that their future attitude would depend solely upon circumstances.

The armies met near Aberdeen. Murray stationed the troops which he had brought from Edinburgh, upon whose loyalty he could depend, on the summit of a hill, and disposed his northern allies *en echelon* along its slope. Huntley advanced

resolutely and attacked his neighbors, who, after a brief resistance, retreated in disorder, whereupon the Earl's followers threw away their lances and crying, "A Gordon! A Gordon!" pursued the fugitives up the hill. Suddenly they came upon Murray's troops, who stood their charge like an iron wall, and who, armed with long lances, had a terrible advantage over the clansmen whose only weapon was the claymore. Huntley's men were forced to retreat, seeing which the nobles rallied their clans and reinforced the Queen's troops; this movement decided the victory; the clans rushed down the hillside like a furious torrent, carrying everything before them, and Murray, seeing that the decisive moment had come, gave the order to charge, and, sweeping down the hill with all his cavalry, turned defeat into rout. The Earl of Huntley, who was very stout and clad in heavy armor, fell from his charger and was trampled to death by the Queen's horsemen. John Gordon was taken prisoner and three days later was beheaded at Aberdeen, and the Earl's youngest son, who was a mere lad, was cast into a prison, which he left upon his sixteenth birthday, only to go to the scaffold.

Mary had accompanied her troops and witnessed the battle, and her calm and courageous demeanor made a deep impression upon her savage defenders, who, during the march, heard her say repeatedly that she wished she were a man to pass her days in the saddle, her nights under a tent, and wear a coat of mail and a sword at her side.

She re-entered Edinburgh amidst general rejoicing, her expedition against the Earl of Huntley having met with popular favor; the motives which had actuated the Queen were but little understood, but the mass of the population were Calvinists and the Earl was a Catholic. His death, therefore, meant an enemy the less, and that sufficed to render the Queen the idol of the hour. In their enthusiasm her subjects expressed the wish that the Queen, who had no child by François II., should marry again. Mary consented, and, yielding to the prudent council of those who surrounded her, resolved to consult Elizabeth regarding the choice of a husband; for, being Henry VII.'s granddaughter, she was next in succession to the English throne if Elizabeth died without issue. Unfortunately, she had not always been so circumspect, for on the death of Mary Tudor she had

claimed the English throne, basing her rights upon Elizabeth's illegitimacy, and she and the Dauphin had assumed the titles of King and Queen of Scotland, England, and Ireland, had had money bearing these titles coined, and the armorial bearings of those countries engraved upon their plate.

Elizabeth was at this period in her twenty-eighth year—just nine years Mary's senior—so that they were not only rivals as queens but as women. Elizabeth was the superior in point of education and possessed a perspicacity and strength of purpose which the Scottish Queen lacked, but she had neither Mary's beauty and wit nor her gracious and captivating manner. Elizabeth was majestic in her bearing and agreeable to look upon; her eyes were keen and bright, and her complexion dazzling, but her hair was coarse and of a fiery red, and she had large hands and feet.* Mary, on the other hand, possessed an exquisitely fair skin, beautiful chestnut hair, and a noble forehead; her

* Elizabeth presented a pair of her shoes to the University of Oxford; their size would indicate that they were made for a man of medium height.

Many historians have asserted that Mary Stuart's hair was black, but Brantôme, who was of her suite in France and accompanied her to Scotland, and must therefore often have seen it, says that it was chestnut.

eyebrows were so perfectly arched that she was sometimes accused of pencilling them, and a glance of her eyes was the most potent of love-philters; her nose was moulded upon the purest Greek model; her mouth was so rosy and smiling that it seemed formed only to murmur words of love, as a flower blooms only to emit its perfume. Her neck was white and graceful, her hands and feet perfectly formed, and her figure that of a goddess; in short she was an almost perfect specimen of feminine loveliness, with which the most critical could find little fault. Mary's beauty was her greatest crime; had there been a single blemish in her face or form she would never have perished on the scaffold.

The cousins had never met, so Elizabeth could only judge by hearsay of Mary's loveliness and accomplishments, but the stories she heard caused her great uneasiness and gave birth to an intense jealousy, which she could not dissemble and which she continually displayed in peevish questions and testy remarks. One day, while talking informally with James Melvil concerning the object of his mission to her court, namely, the selection of a consort for the Queen of Scots, she showed him

the portrait of the Earl of Leicester, and, as that nobleman was the suitor whom she favored, Melvil asked for the picture that he might show it to his royal mistress. Elizabeth refused, saying it was the only one she possessed, and then showed the ambassador a portrait of Mary Stuart herself, asking if it was a good likeness, and expressed warm friendship for her and a great desire to see her.

"It is a simple matter for you to see my mistress, madam," said Sir James; "you have only to feign illness, order your chamber closely guarded, and leave incognito for Scotland, as James V. did for France, when he wished to see Madeline de Valois."

"I should like to do so," answered Elizabeth, "but the thing is not so simple as you think. Tell your Queen, however, that I love her tenderly, and that I hope we shall be better friends in the future." Then, broaching the subject which lay nearest her heart, she said: "Come, Melvil, tell me frankly, is my sister of Scotland as beautiful as they say?"

"She is considered very handsome," responded Melvil, "but I can give your Majesty no idea of her beauty, having no point of comparison."

"I will give you one," exclaimed Elizabeth; "is she more beautiful than I?"

"Madam," returned Melvil, "you are the most beautiful woman in England, and my queen the loveliest in Scotland."

"Which of us is the taller?" persisted Elizabeth, dissatisfied with the ambassador's diplomatic reply.

"I am forced to admit, madam," he answered, "that it is my mistress."

"Then she is too tall," exclaimed Elizabeth pettishly, "for I am as tall as any woman ought to be! What are her favorite amusements?" she continued.

"Her Majesty is fond of hunting, riding, and playing the lute and harpsichord."

"Does she play the latter well?" asked Elizabeth.

"Yes, your Highness, very well—for a queen."

The conversation stopped there, but, as Elizabeth was a fine musician, she instructed Lord Hudson to bring Melvil into her apartments when she was at her harpsichord, that he might hear her play without mistrusting that the performance was for his benefit. Lord Hudson accordingly escorted the

Scotch ambassador into a gallery which was separated from the queen's private apartments only by tapestry hangings, and, having drawn them aside, Melvil listened at his leisure to her brilliant performance. On rising from the instrument Elizabeth was apparently greatly surprised to find she had an auditor in Melvil, and feigning great anger she berated Lord Hudson roundly, even threatening to strike him; but her indignation gradually yielded to the Scotchman's neatly turned compliments, and was completely appeased when he admitted that she played far better than the Queen of Scotland.

Not satisfied with this triumph, Elizabeth desired that Lord Melvil should see her dance and have an opportunity of comparing her grace of carriage with his queen's; she therefore delayed the signing of her dispatches for two days in order that the ambassador should be present at a magnificent ball that she gave. These dispatches which Melvil bore to Scotland set forth Elizabeth's desire for Mary Stuart's union with Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. Such a proposition could not seriously be considered, for the Earl's attainments were but mediocre, and his birth too humble to

render him a suitable husband for the house of Stuart. Mary therefore responded that such an alliance was unfitting the Queen of Scotland.

Out of the English Queen's attempt to belittle her cousin by leading her into an unsuitable marriage there grew a strange and tragic story. Among the nobles who had followed Mary Stuart to Scotland was a young gentleman named Chastelard, who was a perfect type of the nobility of the day. Of gentle birth, for he was a nephew of Chevalier Bayard, accustomed to the best society of Europe by virtue of his lineage and his position in the household of Maréchal Damville; handsome in person, cultivated in mind, a poet and knight errant, he possessed every attribute for the winning of a woman's heart. Thanks to his position with the Maréchal, Chastelard had ample opportunity to pay court to Mary Stuart during her residence in France, and he soon lost his heart to the beautiful, amiable princess, who, on her side, saw nothing more in his gallant speeches and the passionate verses he addressed to her than the poetic and sentimental declarations commonly addressed to ladies at that epoch. It so chanced that at the moment when Chastelard's infatuation for the

Queen was at its height she was obliged to go to Scotland, and that Maréchal Damville, who had been encouraged by Mary's gracious demeanor to enter the lists as a candidate for the succession to François II., and who was unaware of Chastelard's passion, determined to follow the unhappy lady into exile, and took the poet with him to Edinburgh. Little thinking that Chastelard too loved the Queen, he made him his confidant, and when obliged to return to France left the young man at Holyrood to watch over his interests.

The position of the confidant, almost that of an ambassador, threw Chastelard constantly into the society surrounding the Queen, and, as in his capacity of poet she treated him fraternally, his unhappy passion increased and encouraged him to believe that Mary was not indifferent and that he might gain another title than that of "my poet," by which she frequently addressed him.

Emboldened by the Queen's affability, he stole into her chamber one evening and hid beneath her bed; but before she had dismissed her women, her lap-dog began to bark and growl with such vehemence that her attendants were alarmed, and, searching the cause of the animal's excitement,

discovered Chastelard. A woman easily forgives a wrong committed through love, and Mary Stuart, being more woman than queen, pardoned Chastelard. But her gentleness only served to increase the unfortunate gentleman's mistaken confidence; he attributed the sharp reprimand he received to the presence of her women, and was persuaded that had she been alone she would have forgiven the audacity. Three weeks later he again secreted himself in her room, but a maid, having occasion to go to the closet where he was concealed, discovered him after the Queen was in bed, and this time the officer of the guard was summoned and Chastelard delivered into his hands.

The moment was inauspicious; such a scandal occurring at a time when the Queen contemplated matrimony would have proved fatal to her reputation and interest if the audacious lover had not been made to pay the full penalty of the law. Murray took the matter in hand, and, deeming that a public trial alone could save his sister's reputation, he pushed the accusation of leze-majesty with such vigor that Chastelard was condemned to death. The Queen desired to commute his sentence to banishment and to send him back to

France, but Murray convinced her that such use of the pardoning power would entail terrible consequences, and greatly against her desires she was forced to let justice take its course.

On mounting the scaffold which had been erected before the palace, Chastelard declined the services of a priest, and requested that Ronsard's "Ode to Death" be read to him. He listened with evident pleasure, and when the reading was at an end, turned toward the Queen's windows and cried: "Farewell, most lovely and most cruel Queen! Farewell!" He then submitted himself to the executioner and died bravely without expressing either repentance or complaint. His death made a deep impression upon Mary, who grieved over the gallant gentleman's sad fate, feeling it the more keenly because she dared not be openly compassionate.

During this time the news that the Scottish Queen was inclined to marry again had spread throughout Europe, and many aspirants came forward, among them scions of the most illustrious houses of Europe. The first suitor was the Archduke Charles, third son of the Emperor of Germany; the second, the Crown Prince of Spain,

Don Carlos, who was afterward put to death by his father; and thirdly, the Duke d'Anjou, who later became Henri III. The English queen, however, objected to them all, and as to have married a foreign prince was to renounce her right to the English throne, Mary yielded to Elizabeth's wishes. At last Lord Darnley, son of the Earl of Lennox and a descendant of the royal family of Scotland, went with Elizabeth's permission to try his fortune at Holyrood.

Darnley was young, handsome, elegant, accomplished, and a clever and amusing talker, possessing in perfection the use of the attractive jargon affected by the nobles of the courts of France and England. Mary was charmed by his specious appearance, and failed to perceive that beneath it Darnley hid profound ignorance, doubtful courage, and a weak but brutal nature. In his pursuit of the Queen's heart Darnley did not disdain to ally himself with one of her secretaries, David Rizzio, who had great influence with her—an influence as singular as his rise to the position he held in her household.

David Rizzio, who played so prominent a rôle in Mary Stuart's life and whose extraordinary favor

in her sight furnished her foes with such deadly weapons against her, was a son of a musician of Turin, who had given him an excellent education. At the age of fifteen he left home and went to Nice, where the Duke of Savoy then held his court; there, thanks to his proficiency as a musician, he entered the service of the Duke of Moreto, and when, some years later, the Duke was appointed ambassador to Scotland, Rizzio travelled in his suite to Edinburgh. As the young man played both the violin and rebec in a masterly manner, and was, moreover, possessed of a fine voice and sang delightfully ballads of which he composed both the music and the verse, the Duke spoke of him to the Queen, who desired to see him, and Rizzio was accordingly summoned to play before her Majesty. Being both shrewd and ambitious, the Italian saw a chance to better his position and exerted himself to the utmost to please; he succeeded so well that Mary asked him of Moreto, attaching no more importance to the request than if she had asked for a well-bred dog or a well-trained falcon, and Moreto, delighted with this opportunity of doing her a favor, at once acceded to her request.

Rizzio had been but a short time in the Queen's

service before she perceived that music was the least of his accomplishments; that he had a fine education, a clear, quick mind, and a strong, patient character hidden under refined, almost effeminate manners. He recalled to her the Italian artists whom she had met at the French court; he spoke to her in the language of Marot and Ronsard, whose poems he knew by heart; he flattered her with the subtle grace of a courtier, and the Queen, who found little congenial society at Holyrood, soon became warmly attached to him, and, the secretaryship of foreign dispatches becoming vacant, she appointed him to the office.

Fearing some fresh intrigue on the part of Elizabeth, Mary hastened the preparations for her marriage and it was celebrated with great pomp on the 29th of July, 1565, amid the rejoicing of the people and with the full approval of the majority of the nobility. On the eve of the wedding the Earl of Lennox and his son received orders to return to England, and a fortnight later they learned that Queen Elizabeth had wreaked her wrath at their disregard of her commands on the Countess of Lennox, the only member of the family who was within her reach, by committing her to the Tower.

Elizabeth, however, was not a woman to rest satisfied with so futile a revenge, and she soon released the Countess and turned her attention to Murray, and it was not long before she persuaded him to take up arms against his sister. This was the first act of that hostility which proved fatal to Mary.

The Earl of Murray, the head of the Protestant party, had strenuously opposed the Queen's marriage, partly on religious grounds, partly from personal dislike to the bridegroom, and because by it he would lose his influence over Mary. When it had taken place, he and some other nobles rose in arms to support the reformed religion, and within a month of her wedding-day Mary herself rode against them in armor with loaded pistols at her side, at the head of the finest army Scotland had ever seen.

The Earl and his accomplices could not stand against the Queen's troops, and the campaign consisted in rapid marches and countermarches, which gained it the name of "the Runabout Raid." Driven out of Scotland, the nobles presented themselves before Elizabeth, who called them traitors in public and privately assisted them in accordance with her crafty nature.

Mary returned to Edinburgh overjoyed with the success of her first campaign, and little dreaming that it was the last favor fickle Dame Fortune would bestow upon her. She soon discovered that in wedding Darnley she had not given herself a gallant and devoted husband, but an imperious and brutal master, who, having no further reason for dissimulation, showed his true character; he drank, frequented low society, ate gluttonously, and made a contemptible spectacle of himself in many mean and vain ways, and grave differences soon arose in the royal household.

On marrying Mary, Darnley had not become king, but simply the Queen's husband, and in order to endow him with authority equal to that of a regent it was necessary that she should confer upon him the "Consort's Crown," which François II. had worn during his brief reign, and this, because of his conduct, Mary steadily refused to do. Astonished at such resolution in one who had loved him well enough to raise him to her side, and convinced that she was not acting independently, Darnley sought to discover the secret counsellor whose advice militated against him, and his suspicion fell upon David Rizzio.

From whatever source Rizzio's influence had its rise, whether he entreated like a lover or counselled like a minister, his advice was always for Mary's best interests, and bitterly regretful for his share in a marriage which he saw was destined to bring nothing but pain, humiliation, and sorrow to his beloved Queen, he urged her not to relinquish an iota of her authority to one who already possessed far more than he deserved in the possession of her person. Darnley, therefore, was not mistaken in thinking that he owed the failure of his ambitious projects to the opposition of the Italian.

Like all men of weak but violent character, Darnley doubted the existence of firmness and resolution in others; he could not conceive it possible for a woman to hold steadily to a course of action unless supported by some extraneous influence, and believing that if Rizzio were out of the way he could persuade his wife to accord him the "Consort's Crown," he made a contract with James Douglas, Earl of Morton, Lord Ruthven, and three other nobles to get rid of him by murder.

The family of Douglas played so important a rôle in the history of Scotland, and in that of her unfortunate queen, that we must devote a little

attention to them and explain how it happened that the Earl of Morton, then Lord Chancellor of the kingdom, should have become a party to so base a plot. The elder branch of the family, called the "Black Douglases," was extinct at this time, and the name was perpetuated in the younger branch, to whom the distinctive title of "Red Douglases" was applied. It was an ancient and illustrious family, which, when the male line of Robert Bruce's descendants became extinct, had disputed the crown with the first of the Stuarts, and since that period had kept close to the throne, sometimes as its supporter, frequently as its enemy. During the reign of James V., the Douglases not only lost their influence at court but were exiled to England, where they remained until his death. Recalled to Scotland through the intercession of Murray, who was connected with the family through his mother, and reinvested with power and court appointments, the Douglases were still unforgiving; they visited the sins of James V. on his innocent daughter, and it was owing to this grudge against the Stuarts that James Douglas, Chancellor of Scotland, and charged with the execution of its laws, placed himself at the head of a dastardly

conspiracy whose object was the violation of all laws, both human and divine.

The Earl of Morton's plan was to treat Rizzio as the favorites of James III. were treated at the Bridge of Lauder: to arraign him for maladministration of his office as secretary of foreign dispatches, and after a sham trial to hang him without further ceremony. This plan, however, did not suit Darnley, who desired to punish the Queen through Rizzio's suffering, and he insisted that the hapless man be assassinated in her presence.

Secretly as the conspirators plotted, an inkling of their intentions leaked out, and Rizzio received several anonymous warnings, which he treated contemptuously. Sir James Melvil himself essayed to warn him of the dangerous position which a stranger enjoying the sovereign's entire confidence occupied at a court so rough and jealous as that of Scotland, but Rizzio was resolved not to abandon his post, and Melvil, feeling that he had done all that his conscience demanded, forebore to insist further. A French priest, who was reputed able to read the stars and foretell future events, also warned him that his life was in peril and that he must guard against the treachery of a certain bas-

tard; to which Rizzio replied that on the day when the Queen had honored him with her confidence he dedicated his life to her service, and that he was willing to lose it for her, but never to desert her; adding that he had observed that the Scotch were in general quick to threaten but slow to act. He continued that as to the bastard of whom his reverence spoke, and who was doubtless the Earl of Murray, he would take care that he never came far enough into Scotland for his sword to touch him, though it were long enough to reach from Dumfries to Edinburgh, which was a way of saying that the earl would pass the remainder of his days in exile in England, for Dumfries was a frontier town.

When Douglas and Ruthven had determined upon a plan for the assassination, they bargained with Darnley that, in payment for the bloody service they were to render him, he should obtain a pardon for Murray and the other nobles implicated in the "Runabout Raid." This Darnley agreed to do, and a courier was dispatched to the Earl apprising him of the cowardly deed about to be committed and advising him to make ready to return to Scotland. The conspirators then made

Darnley sign a statement acknowledging himself as the instigator and leader of the undertaking, and agreeing to furnish a sum of money for the payment of the hired assassins with whom they had reinforced their numbers. Darnley, however, reserved the right to fix the time of the murder.

Two days later, being informed that Rizzio was closeted with the Queen, he undertook to satisfy himself as to the degree of favor with which the secretary was honored; he therefore tried to enter her apartment by a private door, the key of which he always had about him, but he turned it in the lock to no purpose—the door would not open. He then knocked loudly, announcing himself to Mary, but such was her dislike and contempt for him that she would not admit him, although she had ample time to dismiss Rizzio, supposing that she was alone with him.

Furious at this proof of her disdain, he summoned his assistants, Morton, Ruthven, Lennox, Lindsay, and George Douglas, the bastard of Angus, and Andrew Carew, and set the following night for the commission of their crime. They had just settled upon the details and allotted the parts which each was to play in the tragedy, when

the door of their council chamber was suddenly opened and the Queen appeared upon the threshold.

"My lords," she said haughtily, "it is useless for you to hold these secret meetings, for I am fully informed of your plot, and with God's help I will soon apply a remedy."

Then before the conspirators could recover from their surprise she closed the door and disappeared like a fleeting but ominous vision, leaving them dumb with amazement and consternation.

The Earl of Morton was the first to regain his self-possession. "Gentlemen," he exclaimed, "this is a game of life and death, and the victory will belong not to the strongest, but to the most prompt. If we do not make an end of that man we shall lose our own lives. He must die to-night and not to-morrow!"

All applauded the Earl's speech, even Ruthven, who promised not to be behindhand, although he was still ill from a recent debauch; but after some discussion it was decided wisest to postpone the deed until the following night, as they required at least twenty-four hours to assemble the minor conspirators, who numbered some hundred and fifty men.

It so happened that the next day, which was a Saturday, and the 9th of March, 1566, Mary, who had inherited the hatred for etiquette and the strong love of freedom and unconventionality which had distinguished her father, James V., invited half a dozen people, including Rizzio, to sup with her. Darnley, being early informed of the Queen's plans, communicated them to his confederates, with the promise that he himself would admit them to the palace between six and seven in the evening.

The day was gloomy and tempestuous, as the early days of spring are apt to be in Scotland; toward evening the wind redoubled in fury and snow began to fall heavily. Mary was with Rizzio all the afternoon, and Darnley, stealing frequently to listen at the private door, could hear soft laughter, with the sound of the guitar and the favorite's voice singing those sweet melodies which have come down to our own day, and which the people of Edinburgh still ascribe to him. They recalled to Mary her happy life in France and the artists who had come thither in the suite of the Médicis, but to Darnley they were an insult; the sound of their pleasure maddened him and fed the flame of

his jealousy, and each time that he left the door he was more determined upon the Italian's death.

At the appointed hour the conspirators, who had received the countersign during the day, knocked at a door leading into an unfrequented part of the palace and were admitted by Darnley; the majority, numbering over a hundred, stole into an inner court, where they sought shelter from the storm and from prying eyes under a cart-shed. A single brilliantly lighted window gave upon this court-yard—it was that of the Queen's cabinet, wherein Mary with her ladies, her sister, Lady Argyle, and the doomed man sat at supper, and upon a given signal, which was to proceed from this window, the soldiers were to force the palace door and rush to the assistance of their leader.

Having given these instructions, Darnley conducted Morton, Ruthven, Lindsay, Douglas, and Carew up a private staircase, dark and steep, into an apartment adjoining the Queen's cabinet and separated from it only by a tapestried door, which rendered it possible to hear all that was said by Mary and her guests, and to rush in upon them at an instant's notice.

After warning them that they were on no ac-

count to appear until he cried, "Help, Douglas," and going around by a private corridor so that, seeing him come in by the door he ordinarily used, the Queen's suspicions might not be aroused by his unforeseen visit, Darnley entered the cabinet.

The conversation around Mary's supper-table was gay and unrestrained by court etiquette; the company were in the best of spirits and had abandoned themselves to the delightful sense of well-being which one experiences when seated at a sumptuous table in a warm, bright room, while the wind is howling around the house and the sleet beating on the windows. Surprised by a silence which abruptly fell upon her guests, and inferring from the direction of their glances that the cause of their disquietude was behind her, Mary turned and perceived Darnley leaning on the back of her chair. Noting the malignancy of his expression, she divined that something terrible was about to occur, and at once rose to her feet. At the same moment she heard a heavy, dragging step approach the cabinet, the portières separating it from the larger room beyond were pushed aside, and Lord Ruthven, who had risen from a sick-bed

to do this murder, came in gaunt and ghastly, and drawing his sword, leaned silently upon it.

"What do you wish, my Lord Ruthven?" demanded the Queen, "and why do you appear at the palace in armor?"

"Question your husband, madam," replied Ruthven gruffly; "it is his place to answer that question."

"Explain this intrusion, my Lord," Mary demanded, turning haughtily toward Darnley; "what is the meaning of this unsolicited visit, this disregard of propriety?"

"It means, madam," answered Darnley, pointing toward Rizzio, "that that man must leave this room instantly."

"He shall not leave the room," replied the Queen; "I read his danger in your face, and it is my will that he remain here."

"Help, Douglas!" cried Darnley.

At these words the murderous nobles, who had been drawing nearer to Ruthven for some moments, fearing from the well-known fickleness of Darnley's character that he might not dare give the signal and so would have brought them there to no purpose, rushed into the room, overturning

the supper-table and pushing the guests roughly aside. Rizzio, comprehending that it was his life that they sought, ran behind the Queen for shelter and protection, crying in Italian, "Giustizia! giustizia!"

The Queen, true to the gallant blood that flowed in her veins, stood before the trembling man and strove to protect him with the mantle of her majesty. But she relied too much upon the respect of these rough Scotch nobles, whose ancestors had been fighting against their kings for five centuries; they were not men to be balked by a helpless woman, even if she was their queen, and Andrew Carew, pointing his dagger at her breast, threatened her with instant death if she persisted in shielding the man whose life they had vowed to take. Then Darnley, regardless of the fact that the Queen was soon to become a mother, seized her around the waist and half carried, half dragged her away from Rizzio, while the bastard Douglas, fulfilling the priest's prophecy, sprang upon the luckless secretary and plunged a dagger into his breast. Rizzio sank to the ground, wounded, but not dead, whereupon they all fell upon him, struggled with him, and dragged him from the room,

leaving upon the floor a long trail of blood, the stain of which may be seen to this day, and at the head of the grand staircase they killed him with fifty-one stabs. During all this time Darnley held the Queen, who, thinking all hope was not lost, never ceased to plead for mercy; finally Ruthven reappeared, ghastlier than ever, and on Darnley's inquiring if Rizzio was dead, merely nodded affirmatively, and then, unable to bear any further fatigue in his weakened condition, he calmly seated himself, although the Queen, whom Darnley had released, was still standing.

"My Lord!" she cried indignantly, "who gave you permission to sit in my presence? What do you mean by such insolence?"

"Madam," responded Ruthven coolly, "I am not insolent, but exhausted, for I have taken, in your husband's service, rather more exercise than my doctors would recommend."

Then turning toward her lackey, he ordered a glass of wine, and showing his bloody dagger to Darnley, said as he drained the glass: "Here is the proof that I have earned it."

"My Lord Ruthven," cried the Queen, taking a step toward him, "it may be that being a woman

I shall never find an opportunity to avenge this hour, but the child I bear, and whose life you should have respected, though you respect your Queen's so little, will one day make you pay dearly for these insults." Then with a menacing gesture she left the room by the private door, which she locked behind her.

At this moment a great noise was heard upon the stairway, and Lords Huntley, Athole, and Bothwell, followed by a number of armed men, suddenly appeared upon the scene. These noblemen were at supper, when the sound of cries and the clash of weapons startled them, and thinking the Queen's life was in danger, they hastily collected their followers, and running to her assistance, forced the door, which Morton was guarding, and rushed to her private rooms. As soon as Darnley understood the reason of their unexpected appearance, he hastened to assure them that Mary's life was perfectly safe, saying: "What has been done here was by my orders and will be fully explained to-morrow."

Then going to the head of the staircase where Rizzio's mangled body lay huddled in a corner, he seized it by the hair and lifted the head, while the

bastard Douglas held a torch to the face so that it might be recognized. "Look, gentlemen," he said, "and see if it was worth while to take so much trouble for such a worthless fellow," and recognizing the unpopular secretary, the three noblemen sheathed their swords, saluted Darnley, and withdrew.

Mary Stuart closed the door upon that awful scene with but one desire in her heart—a burning desire for vengeance. But comprehending that she could not simultaneously wreak her wrath upon her husband and his accomplices, she brought into play all her charm of mind and person in order to win Darnley from his confederates. It was not a difficult task, for when the brutal rage which had driven him crazy subsided, he was horrified at the crime he had committed; and while his accomplices, united at the seat of the Earl of Murray, were planning to give him the coveted crown, Darnley, as unstable as violent, as cowardly as cruel, signed a treaty with Mary by which he engaged to betray his associates, and three days after the murder the conspirators learned that the leader had fled with the Queen to Dunbar.

From Dunbar a proclamation was issued, auda-

ciously denying that Darnley had any knowledge of the late bloody business and calling upon the nobles to join her Majesty; even the Earl of Murray and his companions in the "Runabout Raid" were invited to come back and fight under the Queen's banner, a full pardon and the return of her confidence being promised them.

In this manner Mary succeeded in separating Murray's cause from that of Morton and the other assassins, and being joined by the Earl of Bothwell, whom she appointed Warden of the Marches, she raised an army of eight thousand men. The conspirators, finding their heads in danger, fled to England, where, notwithstanding the ostensible friendship of Elizabeth, Mary Stuart's enemies were always welcome.

Unfortunately for her good name, Mary, who was always more woman than sovereign, no sooner felt herself once more firmly seated on her throne than she caused the body of Rizzio, which had been hurriedly buried at the gate of the church nearest Holyrood, to be exhumed and interred in the royal sepulchre, thus compromising herself even more by the honors accorded the dead than by the favors bestowed upon the living.

This ill-advised demonstration of friendship for the dead secretary naturally gave rise to fresh quarrels between Mary and Darnley, which were the more acrimonious as their reconciliation, on her side at least, was but a pretence. Strong in her approaching motherhood, the Queen no longer dissembled her disdain for her husband, and finally, leaving him at Dunbar, she returned to her palace in Edinburgh, where on the 19th of June, 1566, she gave birth to the son who afterward became James VI.

PART SECOND.

IMMEDIATELY after the birth of her son, Mary sent for Sir James Melvil, her usual envoy to Elizabeth, and instructed him to carry the news of her happy delivery to England and to request Elizabeth to be the child's godmother. On his arrival in London, Melvil at once presented himself at the palace, but a ball was in progress, and, unable to obtain an audience, he was obliged to confide the object of his journey to Elizabeth's minister, Sir William Cecil, and ask him to request his mistress for an audience on the morrow.

Elizabeth was dancing in a quadrille when Cecil approached her and said in a low tone:

"Queen Mary of Scotland has given birth to a son."

Elizabeth turned deathly pale, stared wildly about her, and seemed to faint. She first supported herself against the back of a chair, but after a moment, too tremulous to stand, she sat down and gave way to painful reflections.

One of the ladies of the court elbowed her way through the circle which had formed around her Majesty and anxiously inquired the cause of her sudden indisposition.

"Ah, madam," said Elizabeth impatiently, "I have good cause for illness. Mary Stuart has borne a fine son, while I am but a barren stock and shall die leaving no offspring."

Elizabeth was too shrewd a diplomat, notwithstanding her proneness to yield to impulses, to compromise herself by making any further demonstration of her annoyance, and, recovering her self-possession, she finished the interrupted quadrille and danced throughout the evening as though no painful thoughts distressed her.

On the following day Melvil had his audience. Elizabeth received him most graciously, assuring him that she rejoiced with Scotland over the birth of an heir to the throne. Melvil responded that his mistress had hastened to make her cousin a sharer in her joy, knowing she had no better friend; he added that Mary's happiness had nearly cost her life, her accouchement having been long and hazardous. As he dwelt upon Mary's sufferings, with the object of increasing the English

queen's aversion to marriage, Elizabeth became impatient and interrupted him brusquely, saying:

"Enough, my Lord! There is no need for insistence on that point. I shall never marry; my kingdom is my husband and my subjects my children, and when I die I wish engraved on my tomb: 'Here lies Elizabeth, who reigned so many years, and died a virgin.'"

Melvil profited by the opportunity to recall to Elizabeth a desire she had expressed some years previous to see Mary, and urged her to be present in person at the young prince's baptism; but she replied that affairs of state necessitated her being at home, and that, moreover, what she had heard of Mary's beauty disinclined her to expose herself to a disadvantageous comparison. The Duke of Bedford was therefore sent to Scotland as her proxy, and the royal infant was baptized with great pomp at Sterling, receiving the name of Charles James.

Darnley did not appear at this ceremony, and James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell, represented him, a proceeding which shocked the English queen's representative and gave rise to much gossip.

From the night of Rizzio's murder, when he had rushed to the Queen's assistance, Bothwell had made great headway in her favor and had openly espoused her party as opposed to that of Darnley and the Earl of Murray.

Bothwell was at this time in his thirty-fifth year, the head of the powerful family of Hepburn, who were very influential in the eastern Lothians and the county of Berwick. In character he was ambitious, violent, and brutal; addicted to all forms of dissipation, he was capable of any villany for the gratification of his desire for preferment, a desire which he did not attempt to disguise; in his youth he was accounted brave, but for many years he had had no serious occasion for the display of courage.

Darnley's authority, which had been weakened by Rizzio's influence, was entirely overthrown by Bothwell. The gentlemen of the court, following the favorite's example, no longer stood in his presence, but treated him like an equal; his suite was diminished, his plate taken away, and the few officers who remained with him showed him little deference, while the Queen made no effort to conceal her aversion and openly shunned him. She

carried her avoidance of him to such a point that one day when she had gone with Bothwell to Alway, she started back again immediately when Darnley joined them there. He kept his patience, however, until a fresh imprudence brought about the catastrophe which had been foreseen by many from the beginning of the intimacy.

Toward the end of October, 1566, while the Queen was presiding over a court of justice at Jedburgh, word was brought that the Earl had been seriously wounded in the endeavor to seize a malefactor named John Elliot, and lay ill at a house of his called "The Hermitage." Mary was about to go to the council chamber, but immediately postponed the session until the next day and started on horseback for "The Hermitage," and, although it was twenty miles from Jedburgh and over a rough country, she covered the distance in a few hours. She remained closeted with the Earl for some time, and then rode back to Jedburgh with equal haste, arriving there in the middle of the night.

This proceeding created a great scandal, which was augmented and envenomed by the Queen's enemies, among whom were the powerful leaders

of the Reformed Church; Darnley, however, did not hear of it until nearly two months afterward, when Bothwell, completely restored to health, had returned with the Queen to Edinburgh.

Determined that he would bear his humiliating position no longer, Darnley resolved to form a party for himself, and knowing that his treacherous desertion of his former allies had rendered him so unpopular that not a single Scottish noble would draw sword in his behalf, he decided to have recourse to his father, the Earl of Lennox, hoping by his aid to rally the malcontents, who had become very numerous since Bothwell's rise to favor. With his usual indiscretion, Darnley confided his project to one of his officers, who straightway warned Bothwell of his master's intentions.

Bothwell placed no obstacle in Darnley's way, and he set out on his journey without hindrance from any one; but when only a few miles from Edinburgh he was seized with violent pains, accompanied by high fever; nevertheless he continued his journey, and succeeded in reaching Glasgow, though in an exhausted condition. He immediately summoned the celebrated physician,

James Abrenets, who, finding his body covered with pustules, unhesitatingly declared that he had been poisoned. There are those, however, among them Sir Walter Scott, who assert that his malady was nothing more nor less than small-pox.

On being informed of her husband's illness, Mary sent her own physician to attend him, and shortly afterward, although warned that he was stricken with a pest, she buried her resentment, and, braving contagion, went herself to Glasgow.

If the following letters, which Mary is accused of having written to Bothwell, are authentic, she knew the nature of his malady too well to fear contagion. As these letters are very interesting, and little known, we will transcribe them here and explain later how they came into the possession of the allied nobles and from thence fell into the hands of Elizabeth, who exclaimed joyfully as she received them:

"Now, by the grace of God, I hold her life and honor in my hands!"

First Letter.

"You cannot fancy what a state I was in when I quitted the place where I had left my heart—I

was like a body without a soul. Throughout dinner nobody dared speak to me or come near me, for it was evident that I was in a desperately bad humor. When I was within a mile of the town I was met by one of the Earl of Lennox's gentlemen, who presented his master's compliments and his excuses for not coming in person to bid me welcome to Glasgow; among other things, he said that the Earl dared not present himself after the reprimand I had given him at Cunningham. This gentleman begged me—apparently of his own accord—to inquire into his master's conduct and see if my suspicions were well founded. I told him that fear was an incurable disease, that the Earl would not be so nervous if he had a clear conscience, and that if I had spoken harshly to him it was but a just retaliation for the letter he had written me.

"Not an inhabitant of the place has called upon me, which leads me to think that they are all in Lennox's interests, and, moreover, I hear that all the townsfolk speak well of him and his son. Darnley sent for Joachim yesterday, and asked why I did not lodge with him, adding that my presence would help to cure him; he also asked what my purpose was in coming here, and if it

was to effect a reconciliation; whether you accompanied me, if I had organized my household, whether I had taken Paris and Gilbert for secretaries, and whether I was still determined to dismiss Joseph. I do not know who his informant is, but there is nothing—even to Sebastian's marriage—that he does not know all about. I asked him to explain one of his letters, in which he complained bitterly of the cruelty of certain people, and he answered that his feelings had been grievously wounded, but that in the joy of my presence his pain was forgotten. He reproached me several times because I seemed *distrait*, and when I left him to go to supper he besought me to return, which I did, and he then related the history of his illness and accused me of being in a fashion to blame for it, saying that he had lost heart and strength because of my coldness, and so easily fell a victim to disease.

"'You ask me,' he said, 'who the people are of whom I complain? It is yourself, cruel one, whom I cannot appease by my tears or my repentance. I admit that I have insulted you, but not in the manner you reproach me with; I have also insulted some of your subjects, but you forgave

me that. You claim that I continually relapse into the same faults; but is there not hope that a young man like myself, utterly inexperienced, may give the lie to appearances, repent, and correct his errors with time? If you will pardon me but once more, I promise never to offend again. The only favor I ask is that we may live together once more as husband and wife, having one bed and one table —if you are inflexible, I shall never rise from this sick-bed. Tell me, I implore you, what you intend to do; God alone knows how I suffer, and all because I think of nothing but you, because I love and adore you, and you alone. If I have sometimes offended you, the fault is really yours, for when I am offended I complain only to you, when I am able, and have no desire to confide my annoyance to others; but, when we are at odds with each other, I am forced to lock my sorrows in my own bosom, and it drives me mad.'

"He urged me to remain with him and to lodge in the house, but I excused myself, telling him that he required purging, which could not conveniently be done at Glasgow; then he said that he knew that I had ordered a litter for him, but that he would rather travel with me. I believe he

thought I intended sending him to prison; however, when I told him I would send him to Craigmiller, where he would find physicians to attend him, that I would remain near him, and that we should be within reach of our son, he seemed relieved, and answered that he would go in the litter wherever I desired, if I would only promise what he asked; but the truth is he wants no one to see him. He has made me a hundred sweet speeches which would greatly surprise you, but which I have not time to repeat. I pretend to believe all he says, and to be sincerely attached to him. I have never seen him so gentle, so humble, and if I did not know how emotional he is and how readily he unbosoms himself, and if my heart were not impenetrable—save to the darts with which you pierced it—I might be moved by his pleading; but do not be alarmed, for I would die rather than break the promise I made you. I entreat you to be equally faithful, and not to be influenced by the perfidious wretches who are doing their utmost to estrange us. I think all those people were cast in the same mould. Darnley is always ready to weep and to bow and scrape before everybody, from the highest to the lowest, in the

hope of creating friends and sympathizers. I have not yet seen Lennox, who never leaves his house, but I hear that yesterday he had a hemorrhage. You can judge what those symptoms signify. Darnley insists that I shall feed him, otherwise he refuses to eat; but whatever I do for him you must not doubt me. We two are bound to most hateful mates;* may hell shatter our chains and heaven forge new ones which nothing can break, and make of us the tenderest, most faithful couple that ever existed. There is the profession of the faith in which I wish to die. Excuse this scrawl, of which you will be obliged to guess the half, but for which there is no remedy, as I am obliged to write hastily while every one else sleeps; but I take untold pleasure in my vigil, for I cannot rest like the others, being unable to sleep as I would like in your arms. I have so much to tell you that I cannot resist the temptation of hastily filling the bit of paper I have left. Cursed be the madman who torments me so! But for him I could entertain you more agreeably. He has not

* Mary refers to Bothwell's wife, daughter of the Earl of Huntley, whom he repudiated after the death of Darnley in order to marry the Queen.

changed much; *and yet he had a strong dose.* His breath is so fetid that it sickens me; it is far worse than your cousin's, but it affords me an excellent excuse for holding aloof from him and enables me to sit at the foot of his bed. I am going to bed now and will finish my letter to-morrow. I have still many things to tell you, but the night is too far advanced. Imagine my suffering. I am writing to you about myself, and yet I must stop.

"Let me see if I have overlooked anything.

"Lennox's messenger to me on the road.

"Darnley's examination of Joachim.

"The interview between him and myself.

"His desire to be agreeable to me and his repentance.

"The interpretation of his letter.

"Livingston.

"Ah! I had almost forgotten that. Last night at the supper-table at Madam de Rères', Livingston said to me in an undertone that he drank to the health of a friend of mine, and begged me to join in the toast; after supper, as I was leaning on his shoulder near the fire, he said to me: 'Doubtless this visit is very agreeable to the one

who receives it, but no matter how delighted he may seem at your coming, I defy his pleasure to equal the grief of him you have left behind, who will not know a moment's happiness until he sees you again.' I asked to whom he referred, and he replied, pressing my arm, 'To one of those who did not accompany you—you can easily guess whom.' I have completed the bracelet and have attached to it a little key fastened by two cords; it is not as well done as I should like, but I will some day make you a prettier one. Be cautious about wearing it, for I have worked on it before every one and it will surely be recognized. I keep thinking, against my will, of the horrible crime you urged upon me. You force me into dissimulation, treacheries, and crimes which I abhor; believe me I would rather die than commit such actions; the very thought makes me shudder, and the desire for vengeance shall never carry me so far. Darnley now refuses to follow me unless I promise to share my bed and table with him, and not to abandon him so frequently; if I agree, he says he will follow me to the ends of the world; nevertheless, he has entreated me to postpone my departure for two days. I pretended to consent to

his demands, but requested him to keep our reconciliation a secret, as it might give umbrage to some of the nobles. At last I am able to lead him where I like. Alas! I never before deceived any one, but what would I not do to please you? Command, and, come what may, I will obey; but see if you cannot devise some secret means of doing it in the guise of a remedy. He is to stop at Craigmiller to be purged and take the waters, and he will be confined within doors for several days. I am with him as much as possible, but he is very nervous, and although he appears to have confidence in all I say, his faith does not carry him to the point of confiding in me; and I believe he fears that his life is in danger. He touches me on a sensitive spot sometimes by saying that all his crimes are known, but that others, just as great, are daily committed, and though carefully hidden must eventually come to the knowledge of men. He adds sometimes that he hopes that Madam de Rères' accommodations are satisfactory, and has informed me that many people think, as he once did, that I am not my own mistress. It is certain that he is very uneasy on the subject you know of, and that he suspects that there are

designs upon his life; he is in despair whenever the conversation touches upon you, Lethington, or my brother; nevertheless he speaks neither good nor ill of the absent, but shuns mentioning them at all. The Hamiltons are here in force and accompany me everywhere; all *his* friends follow me whenever I visit the house. Burn this letter, for it would be dangerous to keep it, and indeed it is not worth while, for it is filled with dark thoughts. Do not be offended because I am sad and nervous, for to please you I am trampling upon honor and braving remorse and danger. Do not take what I say in bad part, I pray you, and pay no attention to the malicious stories told by your wife's brother, for he is a villain, and you must not permit him to prejudice you against the most devoted and faithful of mistresses. Above all, do not allow that woman's tears to shake your resolution, for her sham grief is as nothing in comparison with the bitter drops I shed and the suffering I endure in order to succeed her; it is to that end, and for that alone, that against my better nature I deceive and betray all those who might thwart my love. May God have mercy upon me and send you all the prosperity that your humble and loving friend

wishes you. It is very late, yet I lay down my pen with regret. Forgive this ill-written letter—possibly I wrote badly purposely that you might be forced to read it several times. Remember a loving friend and write often to her. Love me as fondly as I do you and remember:

"Madam de Rères' words.

"The Englishman.

"The Duke of Argyle.

"The Earl of Bothwell.

"The house at Edinburgh."

Second Letter.

"You seem to have forgotten me, yet when we parted you vowed to keep me minutely informed of all that happened. I have lived on the hope of a letter, and you have kept me waiting much longer than you promised. Although you are unfaithful to your agreement, I continue to play my rôle. I shall take him to Craigmiller on Monday, and he will remain there over Wednesday, on which day I shall go to Edinburgh to be bled, unless you order differently. He is in better spirits than usual and vastly better in health; he does his utmost to persuade me that he loves me, and anticipates all my

wishes, all of which is so agreeable to me that I never enter his room that the pain in my side does not attack me. His company is insupportable. If Paris brings that which I asked for, I shall soon be cured. If you have not returned when I go to the place you know of, I beg you to write and tell me precisely what I am to do; for, unless you conduct affairs discreetly, I foresee that the whole burden will fall upon me. Consider the matter from every standpoint, and mature your plans with prudence. I am sending my letter by Beaton, who will leave here on the day on which Balfour was to have gone. I have nothing further to say, and it only remains for me to beg you to inform me regarding your movements."

Third Letter.

GLASGOW, Saturday Morning.

"I remained at the place you know of longer than I should have done had I not wished to draw from him something with which the bearer of this will acquaint you; it affords an excellent opportunity for the concealment of our designs. I have promised to take the person you know of to see him tomorrow. You must take care of the rest if you

approve of the plan. Alas! I have violated our covenant, for you forbade me to write to you or to send a courier. I did not intend to offend, and if you realized what cruel fears disturbed my soul, you would not be so distrustful and suspicious; however, I accept it all in good part, knowing it arises from the love which I value more than anything in the world. My sentiments and sacrifices are the guarantee of that affection and answer to me for your heart, but I wish you would be more open with me. Explain yourself, I pray; open your heart to me, otherwise I shall fear that I have been supplanted in your affections as Medea was in Jason's. Not that I mean to compare you with such an unfortunate lover, or myself to such a monster, although your influence is powerful enough to force me to imitate her whenever our love demands it or it becomes a question of keeping your heart, which belongs solely to me; for I call that mine which I have bought by tender and constant love and by risks which may yet have terrible consequences. As a price of my sacrifices I ask but one favor, and that is that you will remember a place which is not far from here; I do not demand that you keep your promise to-mor-

row, but I do desire to see you that I may make an end of your suspicion. I ask but one thing of God: that he will enable you to read my heart and preserve you from all ill, at least during my life, which is dear to me only because it gives you pleasure. Farewell, I am going to bed; let me hear from you to-morrow morning, for I shall be anxious until I do. Like a bird escaped from its cage, or a turtle-dove who has lost her mate, I mourn your absence, however brief it is. This letter, happier than I, will go to-night where I fain would be. Pardon my scrawling; I dared not write before Joseph, Sebastian, and Joachim, and had to wait their withdrawal before I began."

As may be seen from these letters, assuming that they are authentic, Mary Stuart entertained for Bothwell one of those insensate passions which seemed the stronger when, as in her case, they are inexplicable. Bothwell was no longer young nor handsome, yet for his sake she sacrificed a young husband, who was considered one of the handsomest men of his time.

Thus, Darnley, who was the sole obstacle to their union, had long since been condemned by the

Earl, if not by Mary, and as his splendid constitution had triumphed over poison, they sought some other means of killing him.

According to the intentions announced in her letter, the Queen left her husband at Craigmiller and returned alone to Edinburgh; a few days later she gave orders that he should be brought there in a litter, but instead of lodging him at Holyrood she arranged for him to go to a lone house outside the city called "The Kirk of Field," giving as her reason that as he was recovering from a virulent disease it was not prudent to take him to the palace and expose the infant prince to contagion.

The location of the house assigned as his lodging was not calculated to dissipate Darnley's fears; it was situated between a ruined church and a neglected cemetery; the only house in the neighborhood belonged to the Hamiltons, who were his mortal enemies, and not far distant was a cluster of miserable huts called "the Thieves' Crossroads." On making the circuit of his new domain, Darnley discovered that two holes, each large enough to permit the passage of a man, had been made in the garden walls; he requested that these apertures, through which marauders and vagabonds

could easily approach the house, should be stopped up, and was assured that masons would be sent to repair the breaches; but several days passed and the holes remained opened and unobstructed.

The night after his installation at the "Kirk of Fields," Darnley was surprised to see a light in the Hamiltons' house, which he supposed to be unoccupied. He made inquiries of Alexander Durham, his valet, as to the meaning of it, and was still further surprised and not a little dismayed when he learned that the Archbishop of St. Andrews had recently left his palace in the town and come to live in the old house. This intelligence greatly increased his disquietude, for the Archbishop was one of his bitterest enemies.

Darnley, deserted by all his servants save Alexander Durham, lived in a suite of rooms on the second floor in the "Kirk of Fields," and, as he was extremely nervous and in continual dread of some attempt on his life, he made this man, to whom he was particularly attached, sleep in the same room with him.

During the night of February 8th, Darnley roused his servant and told him that he thought he heard some one walking in the rooms below.

Durham rose, and, taking a candle in one hand and a sword in the other, descended to the ground floor. He soon returned, however, saying that there was nobody about, and his master, though positive that he had not been mistaken, was obliged to accept his word.

The following morning passed without incident; the Queen was marrying one of her favorite servants, an Auvergnat named Sebastian, whom she had brought from France and to whom she was sincerely attached; but toward evening she left the wedding and went to "Kirk of Fields" to visit her husband, accompanied by the Countess of Argyle and the Countess of Huntly. During the Queen's visit, Durham, while making his bed ready for the night, managed in some way to set fire to the mattress and bedding, but, fearing the flames would communicate to the other furniture, he threw the burning articles out of the window, and, thus left without a bed to lie on, asked permission to go to the city to sleep.

Surprised at the fellow's carelessness and at the promptitude with which he had thrown the bedding out of doors, and remembering the fright of the previous night, Darnley refused to let him go,

but offered him one of his mattresses to lie on, or even to share his bed with him. Durham, however, persisted in his request, saying that he felt ill and would be very glad to consult a doctor that evening, whereupon the Queen interceded for him, promising Darnley that another servant should be sent to pass the night with him. Having thus obtained leave of absence, Durham promptly departed, and just then Paris, of whom the Queen spoke in her letters, entered; he was a young Frenchman who had been some years in Scotland and in the service of both Bothwell and Seaton before he entered the Queen's; upon seeing him, Mary rose to go, and, on Darnley's entreating her to remain longer, she said:

"Really, my lord, it is impossible, for I promised my faithful Sebastian that I would be present masked at his ball, and it is high time I started."

Darnley dared not urge her further, so he merely reminded her of her promise to send a servant to pass the night with him, which promise Mary reiterated as she took her departure.

It was then nine o'clock in the evening; Darnley, left quite alone, carefully fastened all his

doors, partially undressed, and, wrapping a dressing-gown round him, lay down to wait for the servant whom the Queen was to send. He was becoming drowsy when he heard the same noise which had startled him the previous night, and, listening with the strained intentness of fear, he was soon convinced that several persons were moving about in the rooms below. To cry out was useless, to leave his apartments dangerous, and all that he could do was to assure himself that his doors were securely fastened, extinguish the light, lest it might betray him, and await quietly, with his sword by his side, for the coming of the promised attendant; but the hours rolled slowly by and no servant appeared.

At one o'clock in the morning, after a long interview with the Queen in the presence of the captain of the guard, Bothwell retired from the entertainment given in celebration of Sebastian's marriage, went to his lodgings, changed his dress, and shortly afterward might have been seen, wrapped in the long cloak of a German hussar, hurrying in the direction of the "Kirk of Fields." On reaching the lonely dwelling, he entered the garden by one of the holes in the wall and was im-

mediately accosted by James Balfour, governor of the castle.

"Well," inquired the Earl, "how go the preparations?"

"Everything is ready," Balfour replied, "and we only waited your coming to light the train."

"That is well," rejoined Bothwell, "but I must first make sure that he is in his room."

Opening the house-door by means of a false key, he groped his way up the stairs and crept to Darnley's door. The unfortunate gentleman, hearing no further noise, had fallen asleep, but his irregular breathing and restless movements showed how troubled his slumber was. It mattered little to Bothwell, however, whether his victim slept well or not, so long as he was in his room, and, creeping cautiously down the stairs, he rejoined Balfour; then, taking a lantern from one of the conspirators, he descended to the cellar to assure himself if everything was properly arranged. The cellar was filled with barrels of gunpowder, and a train had been laid which only required a spark to set to work the engine of destruction; convinced that all was in readiness, the Earl, accompanied by Balfour, Chambers, and three or four others, retired

to the farther end of the garden, leaving a subordinate to light the fuse. After an instant this man joined them, and then followed a few moments of death-like stillness and intense anxiety, during which the accomplices looked at each other in silence, as if horrified at themselves; then, as there was no explosion, Bothwell turned impatiently on the man who had fired the train and accused him of having imperfectly performed his service. The man protested that he had done his work well, and, on Bothwell's starting to see for himself, offered to return and discover if the train had been extinguished; he accordingly crossed the garden and, thrusting his head between the bars of a sort of ventilator giving into the cellar, saw that the flame was fast creeping toward the deadly barrels; turning he rushed back to his master, and had barely gained a place of safety when a terrific detonation was heard, the "Kirk of Fields" was blown to atoms, the city and surrounding country appeared for a moment illuminated by a fierce glare, then all was darkness; and the appalling silence was broken only by the crash of beams and stones, which fell like hail.

Darnley's body was found next day lying under

a tree at some distance; he had been protected from the fire by the mattresses upon which he lay, and, being wrapped in the dressing-gown in which he had thrown himself upon his bed, many people thought that he had been strangled and carried there, but it is more likely that his murderers had relied solely upon the powder, which was a powerful auxiliary and one not apt to fail them.

None save her Creator and Bothwell ever knew whether Mary was a party to Darnley's murder or not, but, innocent or guilty, her imprudent conduct lent a semblance of verity to the accusations of her enemies. As soon as she was informed of the catastrophe and that her husband's body had been recovered, she ordered the corpse brought before her and had it laid upon a bench, where she examined it for some minutes with more curiosity than grief. It was afterward embalmed and interred that same night, without ceremony, beside the body of Rizzio.

Scottish etiquette ordained that a royal widow should remain for forty days in a darkened room; but on the twelfth Mary ordered her windows to be thrown open and on the fifteenth she departed with Bothwell, for Leyton, a country house about

two miles distant from Edinburgh. Ducroe, the French ambassador, sought her there and induced her to return to the capital; but instead of the acclamations which ordinarily greeted her when she passed through the streets, she was received with ominous silence, and one woman in the crowd cried out:

"May God reward her according to her deeds!"

The identity of the murderers was no secret to the people, and on Bothwell's sending a magnificent suit to his tailor with instructions to alter it according to his measures, the man, recognizing it as a costume which had belonged to Darnley, coolly remarked:

"That's fair; it's customary for the executioner to inherit the culprit's clothes!"

The Earl of Lennox, supported by public opinion, clamored for justice on his son's murderers, and the Queen was forced, in order to appease paternal resentment and popular indignation, to order the Earl of Argyle, Chief Justice of Scotland, to inquire into the matter and to issue a proclamation offering a reward of two thousand pounds to whosoever should give information concerning her husband's murderers. The following day placards

were found posted in public places denouncing Bothwell as the murderer and the Queen as his accomplice; they were promptly torn down, but not speedily enough to prevent their being read by thousands.

The Earl of Lennox accused Bothwell, and the voice of the public seconded him with such vehemence that Mary was constrained to order him tried; but every precaution was taken to prevent his conviction. On the 28th of March, Lennox was advised that the trial was set for the 12th of April; this gave him but two short weeks in which to collect incontrovertible evidence against the most powerful man in the kingdom, and, realizing the futility of such an attempt, and that the trial was but a mockery of justice, he did not appear. Bothwell, on the contrary, went to court accompanied by five thousand of his partisans and two hundred fusileers, who, as soon as the Earl had entered the court-room, mounted guard at the doors of the Hall of Justice, so that Bothwell appeared like a king about to violate the law rather than an accused person prepared to submit to its execution. As the Earl of Lennox did not appear to uphold his accusation, and no proofs of Bothwell's com-

plicity in Darnley's death were adduced, the jury acquitted him, although everybody, including his judges, knew him to be guilty, and the same day he caused the following cartel to be posted:

"Although I am sufficiently exonerated from complicity in the murder of the King, of which I have been falsely accused, nevertheless, the better to maintain my innocence, I am willing to do battle against any one who dares assert that I am guilty of the said charge."

The next morning a placard saying:

"I accept the challenge, providing that you select neutral grounds for the combat," was found posted opposite the Earl's declaration.

The excitement attendant on the murder and trial had scarcely died away before rumors of a marriage between the Queen and Bothwell got abroad, and as their relations were thoroughly understood nobody doubted the truth of the report; but, insensate as such a step was, only two men dared protest against it. They were Lord Herris and James Melvil.

Mary was at Stirling when Lord Herris, profiting by Bothwell's temporary absence, threw himself at her feet and besought her not to risk her

honor by wedding a man accused of her husband's murder, as such a course would inevitably convince those of her subjects who still doubted that she was his accomplice. But the Queen, instead of thanking Herris for his devotion, appeared amazed at his audacity, and, disdainfully motioning him to rise, answered haughtily that her heart was not Bothwell's, and that should she contemplate marrying for a third time, which was not likely, she would forget neither what was due her people nor herself.

Undaunted by this procedure, Melvil showed the Queen a letter which he pretended to have received from a friend in England, one Thomas Bishop; but after reading a few sentences Mary recognized her ambassador's style and divined his intention, and, handing the letter to the Earl of Lethington, who was present, she remarked:

"Here is a most remarkable letter! Read it and see if you do not agree with me that it is a little subterfuge of Melvil's."

Lethington glanced over the letter, and then, hastily drawing Melvil into the embrasure of a window, he exclaimed:

"My dear Melvil, were you mad that you

showed such a letter as this to her Majesty? Do you not know that the moment Bothwell hears of it—and that will be soon—he will have you assassinated? You have acted like an honest man and a disinterested friend, but at court diplomacy pays better than honesty or friendship, and I advise you to leave here as promptly as possible and to keep out of his sight until the storm blows over."

Recognizing the wisdom of such a course, Melvil immediately left Stirling, and it was well he did, for on Bothwell's return the Queen informed him of all that had occurred, and, furious at Lord Melvil, Bothwell searched for him everywhere, swearing he should pay dearly for his temerity.

These symptoms of opposition to his plan, slight though they were, alarmed Bothwell, and, sure of the Queen's affection, he determined to bring matters to a crisis, and a few days later, as Mary was returning to Edinburgh from Stirling, he suddenly appeared upon the road at the Bridge of Cramond at the head of a large body of men, and having disarmed Huntly, Lethington, and Melvil, who had returned to his mistress' side, he seized the Queen's horse by the bridle, and with a show of violence obliged her to retrace her steps

and follow him to Dunbar. The following day, Huntly, Lethington, Melvil, and their retainers were set at liberty, and ten days later the Queen and Bothwell entered Edinburgh together, apparently the best of friends.

On the second day after their return to the capital, Bothwell gave a grand dinner to his adherents among the nobility, and after the repast, on the same table upon which it had been served, amid overturned bottles and half-emptied glasses, Lindsay, Ruthven, Morton, Maitland, and fifteen other nobles signed a document, stating that they firmly believed Bothwell innocent of the crime attributed to him and considered him the most suitable husband for the Queen. This strange instrument closed with these remarkable words:

"In our opinion her Majesty cannot do otherwise than wed the Earl of Bothwell, since he has by force carried her to his castle and obliged her to share his bed."

There were still two obstacles in the way of this marriage: first, the Earl had been thrice wed and all of his wives were living; secondly, his simulated abduction of the Queen might invalidate their alliance. The first obstacle was the

most difficult to overcome, and to that the Earl next directed his attention. As his first two wives were of humble origin, he did not trouble about them, but the third was the daughter of that Earl of Huntly who had been trampled to death by her Majesty's cavalry, and sister of John Gordon, who had been decapitated for his revolt against her, and she was a woman of too much importance to be lightly pushed aside. Happily for Bothwell, his conduct had been such that the Countess was most anxious to regain her freedom, and his friends had little difficulty in persuading her to bring a suit for divorce upon statutory grounds. The Earl promptly confessed that he had been criminally intimate with a relation of his wife, and the Archbishop of St. Andrews, the prelate who had gone and lodged in the deserted house near "Kirk of Fields," in order to aid in murdering Darnley, dissolved the marriage—the suit being brought, tried, and judged within ten days.

The second obstacle, concerning the force put upon the Queen, Mary undertook to remove herself, and, going before the tribunal, she declared that she not only pardoned Bothwell, but that,

knowing him to be a good and loyal subject, she contemplated conferring fresh honors upon him. In accordance with that intention, she shortly afterward created him Duke of Orkney, and barely four months after Darnley's awful death Mary espoused his slayer.

The wedding was gloomy, as befitted a ceremony performed under such sanguinary auspices. Morton, Maitland, and some of Bothwell's sycophants were the only guests; even the French ambassador, who was a creature of the House of Guise, to which family Mary belonged, declined to be present.

The honeymoon was brief, for Mary was soon disillusioned and learned that she had made a second and awful mistake; that instead of gaining a tender husband and wise friend she had engaged herself to a tyrannical master. Coarse, brutal, and violent, Bothwell seemed chosen by Providence to punish Mary for the sins which he had instigated and in which she participated. His temper soon became so unbearable that they quarrelled continually, and the Queen frequently threatened to end her life. Upon one occasion she snatched a dagger from Lord Erskine, who

with Melvil was present at one of their scenes, and attempted to stab herself, crying that death was preferable to the life she led; yet such was her infatuation that, forgetful of her dignity as a sovereign, she was always the first to seek a reconciliation.

These recurrent and scandalous scenes afforded a band of Scotch nobles a pretext for rebelling against the Queen and her husband, and the Earl of Mar, guardian of the infant Prince, Argyle, Athol, Glencairn, Lindsay, Boyd, and even Morton and Maitland, Bothwell's former partisans, took up arms for the avowed purpose of avenging Darnley, and rescuing his son from the hands of the man who had killed his father and was keeping his mother in captivity.

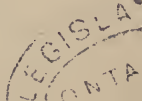
Their uprising was so secretly planned, and so promptly executed, that they very nearly succeeded in taking Mary and Bothwell prisoners at the outset. The Queen and Earl were being entertained by Lord Borthwick, and were at table, when they were informed that a body of armed men had surrounded the house. Mistrusting that it was they whom the intruders sought, and having no means of resistance, Bothwell hastily donned the clothes

of an equerry and Mary those of a page, and taking horse they managed to escape by a secret entrance, just as the confederates forced their way into the house.

Foiled in their first attempt, the confederate nobles marched to Edinburgh, where they had a powerful friend in James Balfour, governor of the castle—the man who had constructed the mine at "Kirk of Fields," and upon whose fidelity Bothwell counted. This man not only surrendered Edinburgh Castle to the confederates, but delivered into their hands a little silver casket, engraved with the letter F, surmounted by a crown, which he claimed contained letters and papers which would be most valuable to them.

This casket, which had been given to Mary by her first husband, François II., contained the letters which have already been quoted, and twelve poems written by the Queen, all of which, as Balfour claimed, were mighty weapons in the hands of her enemies, and worth more than a victory, for the success of their arms could only give them control of her person, whereas his treachery had delivered her honor into their hands.

The fugitives had taken refuge at Dunbar, and



during this time Bothwell rallied his friends and raised an army which he believed strong enough to defeat his adversaries, and, without waiting to be reinforced by the Hamiltons, who were assembling their vassals, he took the field, and on the eve of the 15th of June, 1567, the opposing forces met. The Queen, wishing to avoid bloodshed, dispatched the French ambassador to the confederates' camp to exhort them to lay down their arms; but the nobles responded that "Her Majesty was mistaken in thinking that they were rebels; that it was not against her, but against Bothwell, that they were in arms." The Earl's friends then did all they could to break off negotiations and precipitate a battle, but the soldiers had learned that they were enlisted in the cause of one man, and to fight, not for the safety and honor of their Queen and Scotland, but for a woman's caprice, and they boldly announced that, as it was against Bothwell alone that their countrymen were arrayed, the Earl might defend his own cause.

Vain and boastful as ever, Bothwell sent a knight to announce that he was ready to uphold his honor and innocence against whomsoever disputed it. Every noble in the confederate camp

declared his willingness to accept the challenge, but Kirkaldy of Grange, Lord Murray of Tullibardine, and Lord Lindsay of Byres were chosen to represent them, and each in turn defied him. But, whether from cowardice or because at the crucial moment he doubted the justice of his cause, Bothwell sought to evade a combat by such strange pretexts that Mary herself was ashamed of him, and his most devoted adherents murmured.

Perceiving the discontented spirits of their followers, Mary determined not to risk a battle, and sent a herald to Kirkaldy of Grange, who commanded an outpost, inviting him to confer with her. As Kirkaldy came forward to meet the Queen, Bothwell, furious at his own cowardice, suddenly commanded a soldier to fire on him; but Mary herself interposed and threatened with instant death any one who offered violence or insult to the advancing envoy. The report of Bothwell's rash order spread broadcast through the army, and the murmurs of discontent were so threatening that he realized that his cause was lost. The Queen was evidently of the same opinion, for the result of her conference with Lord Kirkaldy was an agreement on her part to

abandon Bothwell and join the confederates, on condition that they laid down their arms and escorted her to Edinburgh as their sovereign.

The envoy promised to lay her proposition before the confederate nobles, and to return the following day with their response; but he had not reached their lines before Mary, realizing that she must part from the man for whom she had risked and sacrificed so much, was seized with such a fit of weakness that she declared herself ready to break off the negotiations. Bothwell, however, knowing that his life was not safe in camp, insisted that she should not retract, and, leaving the wretched woman in tears, he mounted a horse and departed at full speed for Dunbar.

On the following morning, at the appointed hour, the trumpeters announced Lord Kirkaldy's return, and Mary immediately mounted and rode out to meet him. As he dismounted to salute her, she said:

"My Lord, I place myself in your hands upon the conditions proposed yesterday and since accepted by the nobles, and here is my hand in token of good faith."

Kirkaldy respectfully bent the knee before her

and kissed her hand; then, taking her horse by the bridle, he escorted her to the confederate camp.

She was received with every mark of respect and deference by the nobility and gentry who had assembled to welcome her, but the common soldiers were not so courteous, and as she passed through their ranks they muttered disparaging remarks, and several cried openly:

"To the stake with the adulteress! To the block with the murderess!"

Mary bore these insults stoically, but a worse trial was in store for her. Suddenly a banner was unfurled, upon one side of which Darnley was represented lying in the fatal garden, and upon the other the young Prince was depicted kneeling with clasped hands and uplifted eyes. Underneath was the device: "O God, judge and avenge my cause!"

At this sight the Queen promptly turned her horse, determined to retrace her steps, but she had gone but a few yards when the accusing banner again loomed up before her in the midst of such a mass of soldiers that her passage was completely barred. Whichever way the tormented woman

turned she beheld the hideous emblem, and at last, unable to endure the outrage, she gave a heartbroken cry, and, reeling in her saddle, would have fallen unconscious to the ground, had not Lord Kirkaldy supported her.

That evening she entered Edinburgh, still preceded by that cruel banner, and having already the appearance of a prisoner rather than a queen. She had been in the saddle since early morning, without a moment in which to rearrange her toilet. Her dishevelled hair hung upon her shoulders, her face was ghastly pale, her eyes red and swollen from weeping, and her garments covered with dust and mud. As she advanced, the people hooted and cried after her with terrific vehemence. At last, half dead with fatigue, weighed down with sorrow and bent with shame, she reached the dwelling of the Lord Provost; but even after the doors had closed behind her, the mob swarmed round the house, howling and shrieking out maledictions. Mary made several attempts to appear at the window, hoping that her beauty, which had so often impressed the people, might yet sway them and soften their hearts; but each time that she approached the window she

beheld the hateful banner waving between her and her subjects—an appalling expression of popular sentiment which she had not the courage to face.

This manifestation of hatred was, however, directed against Bothwell rather than the Queen. It was he whom they persecuted in Darnley's widow. Bothwell was the adulterer, the murderer, and the coward whom they abhorred, while Mary was but a feeble, infatuated woman, whose faults they despised, whose weakness they deplored.

Advancing night dispelled the crowd, and as quiet settled over the city Mary's agitation subsided, and her thoughts turned toward the man she had perforce abandoned, and who was at that moment a proscribed fugitive, while she—she thought—was about to resume her position of power and honor. With a woman's eternal confidence in a love which she measures by her own devotion, Mary believed that Bothwell's greatest grief was not for the loss of wealth and power, but over his separation from her; and she set to work to console him, writing a long letter, in which, forgetful of her own trials, she promised, with words of tenderest affection, never to abandon him and to summon him to her side at the earliest pos-

sible moment. When the letter was finished she called a soldier, and, giving him a purse full of gold, charged him to carry the letter to Dunbar, where the Earl should be, and if he was no longer there to follow until he joined him and could deliver it.

This done, she retired and slept peacefully, for, unhappy though she was, she believed that she had mitigated suffering greater than her own.

Mary was awakened the next morning by the step of an armed man in her chamber. Amazed and alarmed by this disregard of decorum, which was indicative of some fresh trouble, she sat up in bed, and, drawing aside the curtains, perceived Lord Lindsay standing before her. Knowing him to be one of her bitterest enemies, she asked, in a voice which she vainly strove to steady, what he wished at such an hour.

"Do you recognize this writing, madam?" demanded Lindsay brusquely, holding out for her inspection the letter she had addressed to Bothwell a few hours before.

"I do, my lord," answered the Queen; "but am I a prisoner that my correspondence is inter-

cepted, or is it no longer permissible for a wife to write to her husband?"

"When the husband is a traitor, madam," Lindsay replied, "it is not permissible for her to write to him unless she sympathizes with his perfidy, which, in my opinion, your promise to recall the scoundrel proves that you do."

"My lord," cried Mary, interrupting him, "you forget that you address your Queen!"

"There was a time, madam," retorted Lindsay, "when I should have bent the knee and addressed you more humbly, though it consorts ill with our old Scotch character to take pattern by your French courtiers; but, thanks to your fickle amours, you have kept us so much in the field with our armor on our backs, that our voices are roughened by the night air and our stiffened knees refuse to bend. You must therefore accept me as I am, madam, now that for the honor of Scotland you are no longer free to choose your favorites."

The Queen grew pale with anger at this blunt speech, but, controlling her indignation, she said calmly: "But, my lord, however well-disposed I may be to take you as you are, I must, at least,

know by what title to address you. The letter which you hold makes me think you a spy, but the boldness with which you enter my room without invitation leads me to think that you are my jailer. Pray be kind enough, therefore, to tell me by which of the two names I should call you."

"By neither, madam, for I am simply your travelling companion and commander of the detachment which is to escort you to Lochleven Castle, your future residence. Once there, I shall leave you to return hither and assist the confederate nobles to elect a regent for the kingdom."

"So," said Mary, "it was as prisoner and not as Queen that I delivered myself to Lord Kirkaldy? That was not according to the agreement, in which he assured me the nobles concurred, but I am glad to learn how much time Scottish nobles require for their violation of their sworn engagements."

"Your Majesty forgets that the engagement was conditional," returned Lindsay.

"Upon what?" demanded the Queen.

"Upon your promise to separate entirely and forever from your husband's murderer; and here," he continued, holding up the letter, "is the proof

that you broke faith with us before we ever thought of revoking our promises."

"For what hour is my departure fixed?" inquired the Queen, beginning to weary of the discussion.

"Eleven o'clock, madam."

"Very well, my lord, and as I should not like to keep your lordship waiting, will you have the goodness to withdraw; and also, unless I am reduced to waiting on myself, to send some one to help me dress?"

As she finished speaking, Mary made such an imperious gesture that, however inclined Lindsay may have been to answer, he felt constrained to bow and retire. A moment later Mary Seaton entered the room.

The Queen was ready at the appointed time, and such had been her suffering in Edinburgh that she felt no regret at leaving. Whether to spare her further humiliation, or to hide her departure from any partisans who might still be faithful to her, a litter had been prepared, and in it she and Mary Seaton journeyed as far as Duddington. There a small boat awaited them, and in the gray dawn of the following day the Queen and her

escort landed on the northern side of the Firth of Forth.

The little party halted at Rothesay Castle just long enough to breakfast, for Lindsay had announced that they must reach their destination by nightfall, and at sunset Mary beheld the sombre towers of Lochleven Castle, which stood in the midst of a lake, and could only be approached by boat.

The royal prisoner was evidently expected, for on reaching the shore Lord Lindsay's squire unfurled his banner, which up to that time had remained in its sheath, and waved it from right to left, while his master blew a hunting-horn which hung round his neck. A boat impelled by four sturdy rowers immediately shot out from the shadow of the castle walls, and a few moments later it grated on the beach at the Queen's feet. Mary silently seated herself at the stern, while Lindsay and his squire took their places before her; and as her guardian seemed no more disposed for conversation than herself, she had time to examine her future abode.

The castle, or rather the fortress of Lochleven, looked doubly gloomy, dark, and forbidding in the

gathering night. Through the vapor which rose from the lake the Queen distinguished a massive structure in the architecture of the twelfth century, flanked by two round towers, which gave it the repellent aspect of a state prison. A clump of old trees which grew against the northern front, shut in by a high wall or rampart, and which seemed to spring from the living rock, completed the *ensemble* of the island. On every side lay the deep waters of the lake, beyond which, to the west, as far as eye could reach, stretched the plain of Kinross, which was bounded on the south by the serrated peaks of Ben Lomond, whose foothills sloped to the borders of the lake.

Three persons awaited Mary at the castle's entrance: Lady Douglas, William Douglas, her son, and a lad of twelve, a distant relative of the family, who was known as Little Douglas. The greetings between the Queen and her hosts were formal, and she was promptly conducted to the apartments on the first floor, overlooking the lake, which had been prepared for her reception, and was soon left alone with Mary Seaton, the only one of the four Marys who had been allowed to accompany her.

Brief and formal as the interview with her jailers had been, the Queen had formed a fair estimate of the people who had begun to play such an important *rôle* in her life.

Lady Douglas was then a woman between fifty-five and sixty years of age, who had been handsome enough in her youth to win the fancy of James V., and had borne him a son, the same Murray who had already figured so prominently in Mary's life, and whom she had always treated like a brother, despite his bar sinister. At one time the King's devotion to her was such that she aspired to become his wife, which ambition might have been realized, for the family of Mar, to which she belonged, was one of the noblest in Scotland; but, unfortunately for her, certain rumors which were current among the young noblemen of his Court came to James' ears. It was said that the beautiful favorite divided her favors between her royal lover and another whom she had chosen from the lowest class, and that this Porterfield was really father of the child who had received the name of James Stuart, and whom the King was rearing as his son at the Monastery of St. Andrews. This story, true or false, checked

James V. at the very moment when, in gratitude to one who had borne him a son, he was about to raise her to the throne; and, instead of marrying her himself, he requested her to select a husband from the nobles of his court. Her choice fell upon William Douglas, of Lochleven, and, as she was exceedingly handsome and the royal favor accompanied the marriage, that gentleman did not object to giving her his name. Lady Douglas, however, never forgot that she had just missed being Queen of Scotland; and, notwithstanding the favors which James V. continued to lavish upon her, she hated Mary of Lorraine, whom she regarded as the usurper of *her* proper honors, and that the animosity she had entertained for the dead queen descended to her rival's child had been apparent in the few words she addressed to Mary.

With age, either from repentance for her past errors, or from policy, Lady Douglas had become a prude and a puritan, so that at this period she joined to the natural acerbity of her character all the harshness of the reformed religion.

William Douglas, eldest son of the Lord of Lochleven and half-brother of Murray through his

mother, was a man of thirty-five or six. In person he was strong and vigorous, with the rugged features and sandy coloring which marked the younger branch of the family. He had inherited the deadly hatred of the Stuarts which his family had nourished for over a century, and which had manifested itself in innumerable conspiracies, rebellions, and assassinations. According as fortune smiled or frowned upon his half-brother, his own power had increased or diminished, and realizing that his success in life depended on Murray's, he had dedicated himself, body and soul, to the Earl's cause. Thus Mary's downfall, which must inevitably result in Murray's elevation to power, was a cause of rejoicing to him, and the confederate nobles could not have selected better guardians for their royal prisoner than Lady Douglas and her son.

The third person who had greeted Mary on her arrival was the Little Douglas, who, as we have said, was a lad between twelve and thirteen years of age. Orphaned a few months previous, he had been taken by his kinsfolk to Lochleven, where he paid dearly for their hospitality, being subjected to all kinds of hardships and indignities.

Proud and vindictive, like all his race, and knowing that, although his fortune was inferior, his birth was as noble as that of his haughty protectors, the boy's first sentiments of gratitude had slowly changed to deep and lasting hatred; but, realizing his helplessness, he concealed his feelings with a courage and wisdom far beyond his years, and, apparently humble and submissive, awaited the time when he should be old enough to leave Lochleven and perhaps avenge the insults which his arrogant relations heaped upon him. It was commonly said that among the Douglas there was a fixed period for love, but none for hate. Little Douglas' hate, however, did not extend to the entire family, for he loved George Douglas, second son of the house, as fervently as he detested Lady Lochleven and William.

George Douglas, who was absent from the castle when the Queen arrived, was at this time in his twenty-fifth year. By a singular hazard, which the scandals of her Ladyship's early life led his father to interpret unfavorably to his own honor, he possessed none of the distinctive Douglas features, and instead of prominent cheekbones, ruddy complexion, light eyes, and red hair,

had a pale skin, black hair, and dark blue eyes. The result was that from childhood poor George was the object of his father's dislike and his brother's animosity, while Lady Lochleven never showed him any of the affection which she lavished on her elder son. Left to his own devices, he developed like a wild shrub, and grew to manhood handsome and vigorous, but uncultivated and neglected. From his fifteenth year he had been in the habit of leaving Lochleven for long periods, and such was the indifference of his family that no attention was paid to his absences and none questioned him regarding the business or pleasure which took him so often from home. He appeared at the castle only at rare intervals, like those migratory birds which always return to the same spot, but only rest there for a space, before flying away again to some unknown quarter of the globe.

An instinctive consciousness of fellowship in misfortune drew George and the Little Douglas together. The latter, seeing the child ill-treated and neglected, endeavored to protect and defend him, and in return received all the little fellow's pent-up affection. Upon one occasion, when the

boy had committed some trivial fault, William Douglas was about to thrash him with his dog-whip, when George, who was sitting in melancholy thought upon a stone, rushed to his assistance, and wrenching the whip from his brother's hands flung it away. Upon that the elder brother drew his sword and George his, and they were about to cut each other's throats, when the boy, having picked up the whip, threw himself upon his knees before William, and, offering him the ignoble weapon, said:

"Strike, cousin. I deserve it."

The child's interposition gave the young men time for reflection, and, ashamed of what they had been about to do, they sheathed their swords and silently separated. This episode cemented the friendship between George and his little cousin, and the latter's affection had grown to be downright worship.

It was among these people that Mary had come to dwell as a prisoner, for from the first she perceived that such was to be her standing at Lochleven. On the morning following her arrival Lady Douglas presented herself, and in a coldly respectful manner requested Mary to go with her

and inspect that portion of the fortress which had been set aside for her personal use. She conducted her royal prisoner through a suite of three rooms, the first of which was intended to serve as her bedroom, the second as a drawing-room, and the third as an ante-chamber. Then, descending by a winding stair into the great hall of the castle, she led the way into the garden. It was a small piece of ground laid out as a flower-garden, with a fountain in the centre, and shadowed by the old trees whose tops Mary had perceived above the castle wall on her arrival. On three sides it was surrounded by the castle itself, and on the fourth a high wall separated it from the outer world. This wall was pierced by a low door giving on to the beach, the key of which hung at William Douglas' side by day and lay under his pillow at night, and day and night it was guarded by a sentinel. This formed the whole domain of her who but yesterday had at her disposal the palaces, plains, and mountains of a whole realm—in a few brief hours she had fallen from the very zenith of power to helpless captivity.

On returning to her apartments, Mary found

breakfast awaiting her and William Douglas standing beside the table. He was there to fill the officer of carver and taster for the Queen, for, notwithstanding their bitter hatred for Mary, the Douglases would have felt themselves eternally disgraced had any harm befallen her under their roof, and it was in order to prevent any apprehension on the Queen's part that William Douglas, in the capacity of castellan, undertook not only to carve the Queen's food in her presence, but to taste of every dish that was served at her table, and even of the water and wine which were brought her.

This precaution annoyed Mary more than it reassured her, for she foresaw that it would destroy all informality at her table; nevertheless, the attention was too well meant for her to take offence, and she resigned herself to the unwelcome company of her jailer, but from that day she so abridged her meals that during the entire term of her imprisonment at Lochleven her longest dinners did not last over a half-hour.

Two days after her arrival, as Mary took her seat at the breakfast-table, she found a letter on her plate, and was delighted to see that the ad-

dress was in Murray's hand; for the only hope that remained to her lay in this half-brother, to whom she had been uniformly generous and kind. Great was her astonishment, therefore, when, on opening the letter, she found it filled with bitter reproaches for her conduct, coupled with an exhortation to repentance for her sins and the reiterated asseveration that she should never regain her liberty. Murray concluded his letter with the announcement that, despite his distaste for public life, he had been forced to accept the Regency, and that he had consented to fill the position for her sake rather than for love of country, as it was his only means for opposing an ignominious suit which the nobles proposed to bring against her as chief accomplice to Darnley's murder. According to Murray, her imprisonment was a mercy for which she should thank Heaven, and a vast improvement upon the fate which would have been hers had he not interceded for her.

This letter was a death-blow to Mary's confidence in her brother's friendship; but, determined not to give her enemies an opportunity to exult over her discomfiture, she controlled her

countenance, and, turning toward William Douglas, said calmly:

"I presume, sir, that you are already aware of the news contained in this letter, for, although we are not children of the same mother, the writer is as closely related to you as to me, and would hardly have written to one of us and neglected the other. Moreover, as a dutiful son, he must have informed his mother of his unexpected aggrandizement."

"Yes, madam," replied William, "we learned yesterday that for the safety of Scotland my brother had been appointed Regent, and, as his respect to his mother is equalled only by his devotion to his country, we hope that he will repair the wrongs which favorites of all ranks and degrees have for five years past inflicted upon both."

"Both as a dutiful son and a courteous host, I would beg you not to go deeper into the history of Scotland," returned Mary coolly, "and not to make a daughter blush for her father's faults; for I have heard it said that the evil of which your lordship complains existed anterior to the date you mentioned, and that James V. had favorites, some of whom, so they say, repaid his love as

poorly as others did his friendship. I am not very well posted upon this subject, but if you wish to inform yourself, there is a man who can give you the particulars—one Porterfield or Porterfeld—I am not quite sure which, as I find difficulty in remembering and pronouncing the names of that class of people; but if I miscall it, your noble mother can set you straight."

Having launched this venomed shaft, Mary rose, and leaving Douglas crimson with rage, passed calmly into her bedroom, bolting the door behind her.

She did not appear again during the day, but sat by her window, whence she could at least enjoy the magnificent view, which included the plain and hamlet of Kinross; but the vast extent of country which lay before her only magnified the oppression of her heart, for when her eyes wandered back from the horizon to the castle, they fell upon its high walls, surrounded on all sides by the deep waters of the lake, on whose surface naught could be seen but a single skiff from which Little Douglas was fishing.

For some moments Mary gazed abstractedly on the boat, in whose occupant she recognized the

child who had attracted her attention on the eve of her arrival. Suddenly a horn sounded from the direction of Kinross, and instantly Little Douglas pulled in his line and rowed away in the direction from whence the signal came, with a strength and skill beyond his years. Mary listlessly watched the child, until the boat became but a dark spot upon the water and finally disappeared altogether; but presently it reappeared, and she saw that it bore a new passenger, who was wielding the oars in such fashion that the little craft fairly flew over the tranquil waters, leaving in its wake a thousand ripples which danced and glittered in the rays of the setting sun.

Soon, swept onward with the swiftness of a bird, it was near enough for the watcher to see that the sturdy rower was a young man of twenty-six or seven, clad in a doublet of dark-green cloth and wearing a Highland cap ornamented with an eagle's feather. As they drew near, his back being turned to the castle, she observed Little Douglas lean forward and speak to him, and the stranger at once turned his head and looked in her direction. With an instinctive dread of curious eyes, Mary hastily drew back from the win-

dow; but quickly as she moved she caught sight of a pale, handsome face, with dark, bright eyes. When she returned to the window, the boat was drawn up on the strip of beach outside the walls, and both its occupants had disappeared.

Everything is the subject for a conjecture to a prisoner, and it seemed to Mary that the stranger's face was not unknown to her; but although she searched her memory she could not recall where she had seen him, and finally concluded that she had been deceived by some vague resemblance to another person. And yet, strive as she might, the Queen could not banish the thought of the stranger nor dispel the vision of the little craft skimming across the lake, which, for some mysterious reason, seemed coming to her rescue; and, lulled by these kindly fancies, she slept more soundly and peacefully that night than she had done since her imprisonment.

As she crossed the great hall the next morning on her way to the garden, she observed that two horses, equipped as for a journey, stood before the door, and a sense of desertion fell upon her, for they indicated the approaching departure of a gentleman and his groom, and she imagined that

the stranger whose coming had wakened a faint hope in her bosom was about to leave Lochleven. Mary neither chose nor dared ask any questions, so she went away to the garden, and as she entered took in its whole extent at a glance—it was deserted.

She strolled about for a few moments, but soon wearied of her lonely walk and returned to her rooms. As she again passed through the hall, she observed that the horses were no longer there, and mounted rapidly to her chamber to see if she could discover anything on the lake which might guide her conjectures. A boat was just leaving the island, and in it were the horses and their riders, one of whom was William Douglas and the other his squire.

Mary watched the boat until it touched the opposite shore, where the travellers disembarked, and mounting rode rapidly away over the same road by which she had come; and, as both horses and riders wore armor, she concluded that Douglas was on his way to Edinburgh. As she stood watching the distant horsemen, Mary Seaton announced that Lady Douglas asked leave to see her.

It was the second time that the two women stood face to face, after long years of bitter hatred on one side and contemptuous indifference on the other, and the Queen, with that instinctive coquetry which makes a woman wish to look well under all circumstances, and especially before one of her own sex, immediately stepped to her mirror, arranged her hair, and readjusted her lace collarette. She then seated herself in a graceful attitude in the only armchair which her drawing-room could boast, and smilingly told her lady-in-waiting that she might admit the visitor.

In spite of her hatred of the daughter of James V., Lady Douglas could not control a start of surprise and admiration as her eyes fell upon the Queen. She had expected to find her crushed by sorrow, worn by fatigue, and humbled by captivity, but she found her as beautiful and haughty as though in the full enjoyment of power and rank. Observing the effect which she had produced, the Queen smiled ironically, and, addressing herself partly to Mary Seaton, who stood behind her chair, and partly to her unexpected visitor, said:

"We are fortunate to-day, for it seems we are to enjoy the society of our good hostess, to whom

we must express our acknowledgments for her observance of the vain ceremony of announcement, which, having the keys of our apartment, she might easily have dispensed with."

"I am sorry if my presence is displeasing to your Grace," responded Lady Douglas, "particularly as circumstances oblige me to inflict it upon you twice daily during the absence of my son, who has been summoned to Edinburgh by the Regent. It was of this that I came to inform your Grace, not with the empty ceremonial of the Court, but simply with the courtesy which I owe to every person who breaks bread beneath my roof."

"Our good hostess misunderstands us," rejoined Mary with affected affability, "but the Regent could bear witness to the pleasure we have always taken in the companionship of all who remind us, even indirectly, of our beloved father, James V. Lady Douglas, therefore, wrongs us by attributing our surprise at her unlooked-for appearance to chagrin or discourtesy, and the hospitality she so courteously proffers does not promise—in spite of her good-will—sufficient distraction for us to deprive ourselves of that which her visits cannot fail to afford us."

"Unhappily, madam," retorted Lady Douglas, whom Mary kept standing before her, "great as is the pleasure which I myself derive from these visits, I shall be compelled to forego them save during the hours I have mentioned, for I am now too old to bear fatigue and have always been too proud to submit to sarcasm."

"Really, Seaton," exclaimed Mary, apparently surprised at her negligence, "we had quite forgotten that Lady Douglas, having acquired the right to sit in the presence of the King, my father, was justly entitled to the privilege in the prison of the Queen, his daughter. Set a stool, Seaton, that our thoughtlessness may not deprive us of our amiable hostess' company. Or," she continued, rising and indicating her own chair to Lady Douglas, who was preparing to withdraw, "if a stool does not suit your Ladyship, take this armchair; you will not be the first of your family to sit in my place."

Lady Douglas was about to make a bitter reply to this allusion to Murray's usurpation, when the young man who had arrived the day previous entered the room unannounced, and advanced toward Lady Douglas without saluting the Queen.

"Madam," he said respectfully, "the boat

which set my brother ashore has returned, and one of the oarsmen is charged with an important message for you." Then bowing courteously before the old lady, he left the room without once glancing toward the Queen, who, deeply wounded by such impertinence, turned to her lady-in-waiting and said quietly:

"Who told us, Seaton, of certain rumors, derogatory to the fair fame of our worthy hostess, apropos of a dark-haired child? If the man who has just left is that child I am ready to assure all incredulous people that he is a genuine Douglas—if not in courage, at least in insolence. Come, dearest," she continued, slipping her arm through Mary Seaton's, "let us withdraw, otherwise our kind hostess may be obliged by courtesy to keep us company a while longer, and we know she is impatiently waited elsewhere."

With these words Mary retired to her bedroom, while the old lady, confused by the flood of sarcasm which the Queen had poured upon her, left the room muttering:

"Yes, yes, *he is* a Douglas, and with God's help I hope to prove it."

The Queen kept up bravely before her enemy,

but, once alone with her faithful companion, she burst into tears. Her pride, both as woman and sovereign, had been cruelly wounded by George Douglas' contemptuous manner, while his hostile attitude had destroyed the confidence which she had intuitively placed in him.

At the dinner hour Lady Douglas, true to her word, mounted to the Queen's apartments arrayed in her handsomest gown; she was preceded by four servants, who carried the various dishes which were to compose the captives' meal, and followed by the old steward of the castle, who, as upon grand occasions, wore his gold chain and carried his staff of office. The servants set the dishes upon the table and waited in deferential silence until it should please the Queen to appear; but when the door finally opened it was to admit Mary Seaton only.

"Madame," she said, "her Grace is indisposed this evening and will not dine; it is therefore unnecessary for you to wait longer."

"Permit me to hope," replied Lady Douglas, "that she may change her mind; at all events, bear witness that I acquit myself of my duty."

A servant thereupon handed her some bread

and salt upon a silver plate, and the old steward, who acted as carver in William Douglas' absence, served her with a morsel of each dish on the table.

"So the Queen will not appear again to-day?" inquired Lady Douglas when this formality was at an end.

"Such is her Majesty's determination," replied Mary Seaton.

"In that case," returned the old lady, "our presence is useless; but the table is served, and should her Grace require anything further she has but to ring." Therewith she withdrew with the same unbending dignity which marked her coming.

As the mistress of the house had foreseen, the Queen finally yielded to Mary Seaton's entreaties and left her room about eight o'clock in the evening, and, waited on by her lady of honor, made a light meal; she then seated herself at a window and gazed sadly at the vast expanse of open country beyond her prison walls. It was one of those superb summer nights when all nature seems to rejoice; the sky was studded with myriads of stars which were reflected in the calm waters of the lake below, and in their midst, like a fiery planet, shone the flame of a torch at the stern of a

small boat, by whose light George Douglas and his little cousin were fishing. The sight of the young man who had so insulted her recalled to the Queen all the trials of the day, and, hastily closing her window, she returned to her bedroom, but she was so nervous and depressed that sleep was impossible, and she spent a restless, miserable night and was in a most irritable mood when Lady Douglas came at breakfast in time to fulfil her duties as taster. Affairs might nevertheless have gone smoothly had Lady Douglas retired after tasting of all the dishes instead of remaining standing by the buffet; but her persistence in remaining, which was perhaps but a mark of respect, seemed to the unhappy Queen like petty and unbearable tyranny.

"Dearest," she said to Mary Seaton, "have you already forgotten that our excellent hostess complained yesterday that it fatigued her to stand. Give her one of the two stools which constitute our royal furnishing, and see that it is not the one with the broken leg."

Lady Douglas grew purple with mortification. "It is the fault of Scotland's sovereigns that the appointments of Lochleven Castle are in such

lamentable plight, madame," she said bitterly, "for the poor Douglases have had so little share in their favor that they have found it difficult to live like simple gentry, and impossible to maintain the splendid establishment of their ancestors. I am told that there was once a musician at the court who spent more than their yearly income in a single month."

"Those who are so expert in helping themselves, my lady," rejoined the Queen, "stand in no need of gifts. The poor Douglases, it seems to me, have lost nothing by waiting, for to-day every scion of the house may aspire to a princely alliance. . . . Verily, it is a pity that our royal sister of England has sworn to remain a virgin."

"Or that the Queen of Scotland is not for the third time a widow," snapped Lady Douglas. "I do not mean to reproach your Grace," she added quickly, as if recollecting to whom she spoke, "for I know that Catholics regard marriage as a sacrament and as such receive it as often as possible."

"Therein lies the difference between them and the Protestants," retorted Mary, smiling. "The latter, not having an equal respect for the tie,

think that under certain circumstances they can dispense with it altogether."

Furious at this reference to her past, Lady Douglas sprang toward the Queen armed with the knife which she had used in her quality of taster; but the Queen rose and stood facing her so calmly and majestically that involuntarily respect, or shame of her angry impulse, caused her to drop the weapon, and, unable to think of any retort which would amply express her sentiments, she signed to the servants to follow her and left the room with such dignity as her anger permitted.

The door had hardly closed behind the chatelaine of Lochleven when Mary resumed her seat, and, delighted over her victory, ate a hearty breakfast, while Mary Seaton respectfully deplored the unlucky gift of repartee which had made her mistress so many enemies; but the Queen only laughed, and said she was impatient for dinner that she might see how her hostess would conduct herself.

Before evening Mary's gayety had evaporated, and the thought of being again in contact with the woman whose pride she was always forced to com-

bat was so repugnant that she determined not to appear for dinner; she was well pleased with her decision when she learned that on this occasion the duties which the family had taken upon themselves in order to set her mind at rest regarding the dangers of poison were not to be performed by Lady Douglas but by George, whom her Ladyship, still chafing over her discomfiture of the morning, had sent to replace her. She was not a little surprised, after his impertinence of the day previous, which had wounded her more deeply than Lady Douglas' insolence, when Mary Seaton informed her that, having dismissed the servants, the young man humbly craved the honor of speaking with her on a matter of great importance. The Queen at first refused to see him, but on her lady-in-waiting's telling her that the young man's manner and bearing were totally different from that of two days before, and that she believed it would be a mistake not to grant his request, she rose and entered the adjoining room with the graceful dignity natural to her, and, having taken a few steps beyond the door, stopped and waited with a disdainful air for George to address her.

Mary Seaton had spoken truly. George Douglas was no longer the proud, insolent person whom she had seen, but a respectful, most timid courtier; he made a movement toward the Queen, but checked himself when he perceived that her lady-in-waiting stood behind her.

"Your Majesty," he said, bowing low, "I am particularly anxious to speak with you alone; will you not grant me that favor?"

"Mary Seaton's presence need be no restraint," answered the Queen, "for she is my sister, my friend, and, more than all, the sharer of my captivity."

"And in each of those capacities, madam, I have the greatest veneration for her; nevertheless, what I have to say is for your Majesty's ear alone, and, as another opportunity may not present itself, I implore your Grace, in the name of all you hold dear, to grant my request."

There was such an accent of entreaty, such respectful sincerity in his voice, that Mary yielded, and, turning to her companion, said, with an affectionate gesture:

"Go, then, dear one; but be easy, you shall lose nothing by absence."

Mary Seaton immediately withdrew and the Queen advanced a step nearer George.

"Now, sir, that we are alone," she said kindly, "pray what have you to tell me?"

In lieu of replying, George sank on his knee before her, and, drawing a paper from his bosom, presented to her in silence. Mary, greatly surprised, unfolded it slowly, with her eyes fixed on Douglas, who still knelt.

"Will not your Majesty read?" he asked, and Mary, holding the paper with trembling hands, read the following declaration:

"We peers of Scotland, in consideration of the fact that our rightful Queen is held prisoner at Lochleven and that her faithful subjects are denied access to her person, and believing it our duty to take measures for her safety, do engage and take oath to employ every means in our power to set her at liberty on conditions compatible with her Majesty's honor, the welfare of the kingdom, and to guarantee the lives of those who hold her in prison, provided they consent to release her; if they refuse, we declare that we purpose to devote ourselves and our children, friends, servants, and vassals, our property and our lives, to secure her

liberty, to assure the safety of the Prince, and the punishment of the late King's murderers. If we are assailed because of our intention, either as a body or individually, we swear to defend ourselves and to aid one another, or to confess ourselves infamous and perjured, and to this end may God help us.

"Signed with our own hands at Dumbarton: Andrews, Argyle, Huntly, Arbroath, Galloway, Ross, Fleming, Herries, Stirling, Kilwinning, Hamilton, St. Clair."

"And Seaton!" exclaimed Mary; "among all these names I do not see that of my faithful Seaton."

Douglas, still kneeling, drew another paper from his breast and handed it to her; it contained but these words:

"Trust George Douglas, for in all the kingdom your Majesty has no more devoted friend.

"SEATON."

Mary looked down on the young man with infinite sweetness, and, motioning him to rise, said with a sigh, in which there was more joy than sadness:

"I see that despite my errors God has not yet

abandoned me; but how happens it that you—a Douglas—should be my friend? Oh, it passes belief!"

"Madam," George replied, "seven years have passed since I first saw you in France, and for seven years I have worshipped you."

Mary started and raised her hand in a silencing gesture; but George shook his head with an expression of such humility, such profound melancholy, that she saw she might safely listen to what he had to say.

"Rest assured, madam," he continued, "that I should never have made this avowal did it not explain my conduct and show you why I may be trusted. Yes, I have loved you for seven years, but as one loves a star one does not hope to reach, or a Madonna to whom one can only pray; for seven years I have followed you everywhere, without so much as a glance from you, and without attempting, by word or act, to attract your attention. I was aboard the ship that brought you to Scotland; I was among the Regent's troops when you fought with Huntly, I was of your escort when you went to visit the King at Glasgow. I reached Edinburgh an hour after your departure for this place,

and then for the first time my mission in life was revealed to me, and I knew that the passion which had hitherto seemed a sacrilege was on the contrary a favor from on high. I learned that the nobles of your party were assembled at Dumbarton, and I hastened thither; I pledged my name, my honor, and my life, and, thanks to the ease with which I can pass in and out of this fortress, I obtained the privilege of bringing you the act they had just signed. Now, madam, forget all that I have said save the assurance of my unalterable respect and devotion; forget that I am near you. . . . I am used to obscurity, . . . but if you need me you have only to make a sign, for my devotion, my life, has been at your service for seven years."

"Alas!" exclaimed Mary, "only this morning I complained that no one loved me. I ought rather to bewail the fact that I am still beloved, for the passion I inspire is fatal. Look back, Douglas, and count the graves that, young as I am, I have left along my path. François, Chatelard, Rizzio, Darnley! . . . Ah, it must be something stronger than love which leads you to cleave to me now; it must be true, unselfish devotion and heroism, the

more so because, as you have said, there is no recompense possible—you fully understand that, Douglas?"

"Madam, madam," cried Douglas, "am I not more than rewarded by the joy of seeing you daily, the hope that you will regain your liberty through me, and the certitude that, if I cannot set you free, I shall at least die before your eyes."

"Poor boy!" murmured Mary, lifting her eyes heavenward, as if she foresaw the fate which awaited her new champion.

"Say, rather, 'Happy Douglas!'" he responded, touching his lips to the hand she held out to him.

"Upon what did you and my friends resolve?" asked the Queen, raising him from the humble attitude he had thus far maintained.

"Nothing as yet, madam, for we have not had time. Your escape, which would be impossible without me, will be very difficult even with my aid, and your Grace saw that it was necessary for me to be absolutely rude and disrespectful before my mother in order to win the confidence which has enabled me to see you to-day; if that confidence ever becomes so great that either my mother or brother entrust me with the castle keys, your

escape is assured. But your Majesty must not be surprised at anything, not deceived by appearances, for before every one I must appear a true Douglas, that is, your Majesty's enemy; and unless your life is in danger I shall not betray my devotion by word or action. I implore your Grace to believe that, present or absent, silent or speaking, idle or active, my devotion is unchangeable—all will be done in your service. Look in that direction every evening," he continued, crossing to the window and pointing out a cottage on the slope of Kinross, "and so long as you see a light shining there, know that your friends watch over you, and that you must not lose hope."

"Thanks, Douglas, thanks!" exclaimed the Queen. "It inspires me with fresh courage to meet a heart like yours!"

"I must take leave of your Majesty now," the young man said quietly, coloring with pleasure, "for to remain longer would rouse suspicion. . . . and remember, madam, that the moment I am suspected, that light, which is your only beacon of hope, will be extinguished and all will be dark again."

Douglas then bowed, even more respectfully

than he had yet done, and withdrew, leaving Mary with her heart filled with hope and gratified pride, for the homage which had just been laid at her feet was tendered to the woman rather than the Queen.

As she had promised, the Queen repeated to Mary Seaton all that Douglas had said, . . . even his declaration of love, . . . and they waited impatiently for nightfall to see if the promised star of hope would shine. They were not disappointed, for as twilight deepened into darkness the light appeared. Trembling with joy, the Queen remained hour after hour beside the window, gazing on the distant light which proved she was not yet forsaken; finally Mary Seaton prevailed upon her to go to bed, but twice during the night she stole silently to her lookout: the ray of hope was always shining and did not flicker until the dawn, when it faded from sight with its sister stars.

At breakfast George announced his brother's expected return and his own departure; he was to leave next morning for a conference with the nobles who had signed the declaration, and who had separated immediately afterward to raise troops in their respective counties. He showed

the Queen, who was both impatient and nervous, that it would not be wise for her to make any attempt at flight until she could be sure of assembling an army strong enough to take the field, and that, as for him, her guardians were so accustomed to his abrupt departures and unexpected returns that his going would rouse no suspicion.

Toward evening a bugle announced William Douglas' return; he was accompanied by Lord Ruthven, son of the man who murdered Rizzio and who had died an exile in England, and they came a day in advance of Lord Lindsay of Byres and Sir Robert Melvil, brother of Mary's former ambassador to Elizabeth. The three noblemen were entrusted with a mission to the captive Queen on the part of the Regent.

The next day the old order of life was restored. William resumed his office of carver, and the breakfast hour passed without Mary learning aught of George's departure or of Ruthven's presence in the castle; but in the early afternoon the clear notes of a bugle rang out from the shore, and, hastening to the window, Mary espied a little troop of horsemen waiting for the boat to come and take off such of them as proposed to visit the castle.

The distance was too great for the Queen to recognize any of the party, but it was evident enough from the signals exchanged between the strangers and the inhabitants of the castle that they were expected, and she thus knew the newcomers to be her enemies. Filled with misgivings she watched the boat which went to fetch them, and perceived that only two of the party entered it; as the little craft approached the fortress her forebodings changed to downright fear, for in one of its passengers she thought she recognized the man who, a fortnight previous, had escorted her to her prison. It was indeed Lord Lindsay; as usual, he wore a visorless casque which revealed his rugged face, whose deep lines betrayed a rough, violent nature, and his long black beard, sprinkled with gray, which fell upon his chest.

His body was protected, as in battle, by a cuirass which had once been well polished and gilded, but which, from incessant exposure to rain and fog, had grown dull and rusty; across his back he wore a great sword, which was so heavy it could only be handled with both hands, and so long that while the hilt touched his left shoulder the point reached

to his right spur. In a word, Lindsay was a campaigner, not a courtier; brave almost to temerity but rough and insolent, knowing nothing but duty and brute force, and always ready to use the one in the service of the other.

The Queen was so engrossed by the sight of Lord Lindsay that she neglected to look at his companion until the boat was about to land; she was somewhat reassured to find that it was Sir Robert Melvil, for, whatever happened, she felt sure that in him she should find a sincere, if not ostensible sympathizer. A man can be judged somewhat by his dress, and Sir Robert's contrasted strikingly with his companion's. He wore a black velvet doublet with a cap and plume of the same color, the latter held in place by a gold clasp, and his only weapon was a short sword, which seemed worn rather to indicate his rank than for purposes of attack or defence. His features and bearing harmonized with his pacific costume; his pale face expressed both shrewdness and intelligence, his bright eyes shone with a kindly light, and his voice was gentle and winning; in figure he was tall and thin, and he stooped slightly, rather from habit than age, for he was at this time only forty-five.

The presence of this peaceable man did not, however, wholly allay Mary's fears, and when the boat disappeared behind the abutment of a tower on its way to the landing-place before the main gateway, she told Mary Seaton to go down to the great hall and try to ascertain what brought Lord Lindsay to Lochleven; knowing that once she understood the motive of his visit, she could, upon a moment's notice, compose her countenance and assume the serene and majestic demeanor whose softening influence upon her enemies she had often observed.

Left alone, her eyes flew to the cottage on the moor-side wherein lay her only hope, but the distance was too great for her to distinguish anything, and moreover its shutters closed at dawn and opened only at night; like clouds which, having hidden the sun all day, break away at night and permit the storm-driven mariner to see his pole-star.

After a brief absence Mary Seaton returned with a troubled air.

"Well, dearest?" said the Queen, turning from the window.

"Your Majesty was not mistaken; it was indeed

Lord Lindsay and Sir Robert Melvil who arrived, but there is another guest here who came yesterday with William Douglas, and his presence I fear will be even more obnoxious to your Grace than either of those I have mentioned."

"Tell me who it is, Mary; you see that I am calm and prepared for anything."

"Ah, madam, you must summon all your courage, not only to hear who has come, but shortly to meet him—it is Lord Ruthven."

The Queen uttered a low cry and seemed about to swoon; she clung to the casement for support, and Mary Seaton, alarmed at the effect of the hated name, sprang to assist her unhappy mistress.

"It is nothing," the Queen said faintly, pressing her hand against her heart; "I shall soon be myself again." After an instant she continued: "You were right, Mary; that name is too intimately associated with bitter memories for me to hear it calmly. Alas, the demand which such men are commissioned to make is sure to be one of terrible import. But never mind, I shall soon be prepared to receive my brother's ambassadors . . . for doubtless they come in his name. . . . Do you,

dear, prevent their entering until I have had time to compose myself and recover my wits—you know me, it will not take long." She then entered her bedroom with a firm step and bolted the door after her.

Mary Seaton stood for a moment lost in admiration of the strength of character which gave Mary Stuart, ordinarily so thoroughly a woman, a man's courage in the presence of danger; she then crossed the room to secure the door with a wooden bar which ran through two iron staples, but to her surprise the bar had disappeared and there remained no way of fastening the door upon the inside. While she was searching for something which could replace the abstracted bar, she heard some one coming up the stairs, and guessing, by the heavy, resounding step, that it was Lord Lindsay, she slipped her arm through the staples, determined to let it be broken rather than allow her mistress to be disturbed one moment before it suited her convenience.

She heard the heavy footstep cross the landing, felt some one try the door, and then a harsh voice cried:

"Open the door! Open it instantly!"

"By what right," demanded Mary Seaton, "do you thus insolently order me to open the Queen's door?"

"By the right which the Regent's ambassador possesses to enter anywhere in his name; I am Lord Lindsay, and I wish to speak to Lady Mary Stuart."

"An ambassador," returned Mary Seaton, "is not dispensed from announcing his visit to a lady —much less to a queen—and though this one be, as he claims, Lord Lindsay, he will await his sovereign's pleasure, as any noble Scotchman would do in his place."

"By St. Andrew!" cried Lindsay, "if you do not open the door, I will force it!"

"Do not be so hasty, my lord, I beg of you," said another voice, which Mary recognized as Melvil's; "let us wait a moment for Lord Ruthven, who is not quite ready."

"Upon my soul!" cried Lindsay, shaking the door violently, "I will not wait a second."

Then, as the door resisted his efforts, he turned angrily on the steward, who had conducted them to the Queen's apartments:

"What does this mean, sirrah?" he shouted,

"did you not tell me that the bar had been removed?"

"And so it has, my lord."

"Then what has the wench barred it with?"

"With my arm, my lord," answered the intrepid girl, "as a Douglas did for James I. in the days when the Douglases had black hair instead of red, and were loyal subjects instead of traitors."

"As you are so familiar with Scotch history," retorted Lindsay savagely, "you doubtless remember that that frail barrier failed to check Graham, and that Catherine Douglas' arm was broken like a willow twig and James I. killed like a dog."

"And you, my Lord Lindsay, "replied Mary Seaton coolly, "must be familiar with the ballad which is sung to this day:

> " 'Now shunned be Robert Graham,
> The assassin of the King;
> May all men curse the dastard
> Who did this evil thing!' "

"Mary, open the door immediately," called the Queen, who had heard the dispute from her bedroom.

Mary obeyed, and Lord Lindsay, followed by

Melvil, who walked slowly with lowered head, as if ashamed, crossed the ante-chamber and entered the drawing-room.

"Well, where is she?" said Lindsay impatiently, glancing round; "has she not kept us cooling our heels long enough, or does she fancy herself still Queen for all these bolts and bars?"

"Patience, my lord," remonstrated Sir Robert mildly; "Lord Ruthven has not yet come, and, since we can do nothing without him, we might better wait quietly."

"Those who like can wait," snarled Lindsay, aflame with anger, "but I shall not bide her pleasure, and wherever Mary Stuart is there I propose to go."

As he spoke he took several steps in the direction of the Queen's bedroom, but at that moment the door was suddenly opened and Mary appeared, apparently unmoved either by the visit or the visitor's insolence, and she was so beautiful, so serenely dignified, that Lindsay was awed to silence, and inclined himself respectfully before her as if in obedience to a superior power.

"We fear we have kept you waiting, my Lord Lindsay," said the Queen quietly, without other

acknowledgment of the ambassador's salute than a slight inclination of her head, "but a woman cannot receive even her enemies without first giving some attention to her toilet—men are often less punctilious in that respect," she added, glancing at Lindsay's rusty armor and travel-stained doublet. "Good-evening, Melvil," she continued, disregarding Lindsay's muttered apologies; "you are as welcome in our prison as you were in our palace, for in either place I know you for a courteous gentleman."

Then, turning toward Lindsay, who was impatiently watching the door, she said, pointing to the sword which hung across his shoulder:

"You have there, my lord, a faithful, if somewhat ponderous companion. Did you expect to find enemies here against whom to employ it? If not, it is a strange ornament to wear in a woman's presence. However, I am too thoroughly a Stuart to fear the sight of a sword, even though it be a naked one."

"It is not out of place, here, madam," replied Lindsay, drawing the huge blade from its scabbard and leaning upon it, "for it is an old acquaintance of your family."

"My lord, your ancestors were too brave and loyal for me to question the truth of your statement, and so good a blade must have rendered good service."

"Yes, madam, yes; that it did, but of a kind kings never pardon. He who ordered this sword made was Archibald the Bold, and he wore it first upon the day when he forced his way into your great-grandfather James III.'s tent and captured his crew of fawning minions, whom he hung from the bridge of Lauder with the halters of his soldier's horses. It was with this same sword that, in the tiltyard, he cut down Spens of Kilspendie, who had insulted him in the presence of James IV., counting upon his royal master's protection, which, however, shielded him no better than his buckler, which was cut in twain. Upon its master's death, which occurred two years later, after the defeat of Flodden, where he left both his sons and two hundred warriors bearing the name of Douglas upon the field, it passed to the Earl of Angus, who drew it from the scabbard when he drove the Hamiltons out of Edinburgh. Lastly, your father, James V., saw it flash at the battle of Tweed's Bridge, when Buccleuch, incited by him, strove

to wrest him from the guardianship of the Douglases."

"How happens it, pray," said Mary, "that after such exploits the sword did not remain in the Douglas family? The Earl of Angus must have had a good reason for parting with this modern Excalibar."

"Aye, madam, he had an excellent reason for giving it to me," replied Lindsay, ignoring Melvil's gestures of entreaty, "and this part of the sword's history will interest you more than all the rest, for, being so near the present time, you will readily recall the circumstances. It was but ten days since, upon the field of Carberry Hill, when that infamous traitor Bothwell challenged to single combat any man who dared assert that he was guilty of the King your husband's murder, that I received this trusty sword. I was the third to tell him to his face that he was an assassin; and, as he refused to fight with the others, pretexting that they were but simple barons, I, who am an earl, came forward in my turn. Then it was that noble Morton girded me with his good sword that I might fight the scoundrel to the death, and, had his presumption been a little greater, or his cow-

ardice a trifle less, I would have done such work with this good steel that the dogs and vultures would have feasted on his carcass."

Melvil and Mary Seaton gazed at each other aghast, for the events which Lindsay recalled were so recent they still rankled in the Queen's heart; but she, with incredible impassibility and with a disdainful smile upon her lips, replied coolly:

"It is easy, my lord, to vanquish an enemy who does not enter the lists; but, believe me, had I inherited my father's sword as well as his sceptre, your sword, long as it is, might have proved a little too short. Permit me now to recall to your mind the business which brought you here, for I presume you did not journey to Lochleven solely to regale me with the history of your own and your friends' exploits."

"You are right, madam," answered Lindsay, flushed with anger; "and you would already know the nature of our mission had Lord Ruthven been a little more punctual. But, take patience, madam; you will not have long to wait now, for I hear his step on the stair."

The Queen, who had borne all Lindsay's insults bravely, paled visibly, and Melvil, who had not

taken his eyes from her face, put out his hand toward her armchair as if to force her into it; but she motioned to him that there was no need, and, to all appearances perfectly calm, stood waiting Lord Ruthven's coming.

Lord Ruthven was both a soldier and a statesman, and the costume whch he wore upon this occasion was suited to either profession; it consisted of an embroidered buff coat, suitable for a sovereign's levee, and over which, in case of need, a cuirass could readily be buckled. Like his father he was pale, and like him predestined to die young, and his features were marked by the peculiar melancholy by which the soothsayers of the time claimed to recognize those who were destined to die a violent death.

He possessed the polished dignity of a courtier and the inflexible firmness of a minister, and though determined to obtain from Mary Stuart, if need be by force, that which he had come to demand in the Regent's name, he was none the less polite, and on entering bent before her with perfect courtesy. The steward moved a heavy table provided with writing materials near the empty armchair, and then, at a sign from Lord Ruthven,

left the room, leaving the Queen and the three ambassadors together.

The Queen, assuming that the table and chair were for her use, seated herself, and, after a moment, broke the sombre silence:

"Gentlemen," she said, "I wait to learn the nature of your mission." Then, as they still kept silence, she continued: "Is it possible that the message you have brought me is so terrible that two such valiant soldiers as Lord Lindsay and Lord Ruthven should hesitate to deliver it?"

"Madam," responded Ruthven, "I belong to a family who, as you know, never hesitate to do their duty, no matter how painful it may be; moreover, we hope that your captivity has prepared you for the communication we bring from the Secret Council."

"The Secret Council!" exclaimed the Queen; "by what right, pray, does that body, established by me, assume to act without me? Never mind, I will hear your message; I presume it is a petition imploring my mercy for those who have dared to arrogate the power I hold from God alone."

"Madam," answered Ruthven, who seemed to

be charged with the painful office of spokesman, "I am sorry to undeceive you, but it is not your clemency we come to ask, but a pardon from the Secret Council which we have to offer you."

"A pardon for me, my lord!" cried Mary; "subjects offer a pardon to their Queen! Truly, the idea is so astounding that my righteous anger is overcome by surprise, and I beg of you to continue, instead of commanding you to be silent, as probably I ought to do."

"I obey you the more willingly, madam," continued Ruthven imperturbably, "as this pardon is offered only upon certain conditions set forth in these deeds, which will tend to the pacification of the State, so grievously compromised by the misdeeds they are intended to repair."

"And shall I be permitted to read these deeds, my lord, or am I expected to sign them blindly, confiding implicitly in the honorable motives of those who present them?"

"Madam," replied Ruthven, "the Secret Council expressly desired that you should have full cognizance of the contents. Your signature is not compulsory."

"Then be kind enough to read them to me, my

lord; that is, I think, a part of the strange office you have undertaken."

Lord Ruthven unfolded one of the two papers he held in his hand, and read the following in his usual impassive manner:

"Called at an early age to the administration of the crown and realm of Scotland, we have toiled with the utmost diligence therein; but we have become so wearied and discouraged in body and mind that we no longer feel able to bear the burden of affairs of State; wherefore, as Heaven has blessed us with a son, to whom we are desirous to insure, even during our lifetime, the succession to the crown which is his by right of birth, we, because of the motherly affection we bear our son, have renounced and demitted, and by these letters of our free good-will renounce and demit, the crown, government, and guiding of the realm of Scotland in favor of our said son, that he may succeed us as native Prince thereof, as if we had been removed by death, and not by our proper act. And that this demission of our royal authority may have more full and solemn effect, we give, grant, and confer full, free, and plain power to our trusty cousins, Lord Lindsay of Byres, and William

Lord Ruthven, to appear in our name before as many of the nobility, clergy, and gentry as may be assembled at Stirling, and there, in our name and behalf, publicly to renounce the crown, guidance, and government of this our kingdom of Scotland.

"Signed of our own pleasure, and in witness of the last expression of our royal will, at our Castle of Lochleven, this — day of June, 1567."

The day of the month was not inserted.

There was a moment's silence as Ruthven finished reading; then he asked: "Did you understand, madam?"

"I heard some seditious words which I scarcely comprehended," answered the Queen, "and for your honor, my Lord William Ruthven, and for yours, my Lord Lindsay, I essayed to believe my ears deceived me."

"Madam," interrupted Lindsay, impatient at his long silence, "our honor will not be affected by the opinion of a woman who has been so careless of her own."

"My lord!" exclaimed Melvil, indignantly taking a step toward the rude earl.

"Let him speak, Melvil," said the Queen; "my

conscience is protected by a cuirass of innocence as invulnerable as the armor in which my Lord Lindsay is so prudently arrayed, although, to the shame of justice, we no longer possess a sword. Continue, my lord," she added, turning toward Ruthven; "is a date and my signature all that my loving and faithful subjects require of me? That second document, which you have kept until the last, doubtless contains some demand which I shall find more difficult to grant than to yield the crown, which belongs to me by right of inheritance, to a baby barely a year old, and abandon my sceptre for a distaff."

"This second paper," responded Ruthven, unmoved by the Queen's irony, "is an act by which your Grace confirms the decision of the Secret Council, who have appointed your well-beloved brother, Earl of Mar and Murray, Regent of the Kingdom."

"What!" cried Mary, "has the Secret Council need of my confirmation of an act of so little importance, and does my well-loved brother require that I should add another title to those I have already conferred upon him? Really, all this is most respectful, most affectionate, most touching,

and I should not complain of his fraternal attitude." She paused for a moment; then, rising and drawing herself to her full height, she said haughtily:

"Gentlemen, return to those who sent you, and tell them that Mary Stuart has no reply to make to such preposterous demands."

"Beware, madam," said Ruthven, "for, as I have already told you, it is only upon the conditions here set forth that your pardon will be accorded."

"And what will happen if I refuse this magnanimous pardon?"

"It is not my place to prejudge your cause, madam; but your Grace is sufficiently acquainted with the history and laws of both Scotland and England to know that murder and adultery are crimes for which more than one queen has been punished by death."

"And upon what proofs, pray, am I accused of such crimes? Pardon my insistence, which is taking up your precious time, but I have so much at stake that such a question is surely permissible."

"There are but two, madam," responded Ruthven, "but they are irrefutable; they are the hasty

marriage of the widow of a murdered man with the chief of his assassins, and the letters which have been given to us by James Balfour, which prove that the guilty couple's hearts were united before their blood-stained hands were joined in wedlock."

"My lord," cried the Queen, "have you forgotten a certain supper which this same Bothwell gave to the very nobles who to-day accuse him of adultery and murder? Have you forgotten that at the close of the banquet, and upon the very table whereon it had been spread, a document was signed urging this woman, whom to-day you accuse of criminal haste, to lay aside her widow's weeds and don bridal robes? If you have forgotten these facts, my lords, it does no credit either to your sobriety or your memories. I have carefully preserved that petition, and can lay it before your eyes, and, if you look well, you will find among the signatures which adorn it the names of Ruthven and Lindsay. Oh, noble Herries! Oh, loyal James Melvil!" she cried passionately; "you were right when you begged me on your knees not to contract this marriage, which, as I now see clearly, was but a trap set for an ignorant woman by perfidious counsellors or disloyal nobles."

"Madam!" exclaimed Ruthven, beginning to lose his temper, in spite of his impassibility, "this discussion is irrelevant to the object of our visit; kindly give your attention to the matter before you, and inform us whether, if your life and honor be assured, you will agree to abdicate."

"What guarantee have I that the promises here made will be kept?"

"Our word, madam," replied Ruthven haughtily.

"Your word, my lord, is a poor pledge to offer when you forget your signature so quickly."

"Enough, Ruthven, enough!" cried Lindsay. "Do you not see that for over an hour this woman has responded to our proposals only by insults? Let us begone!"

"Yes, we will go," replied Ruthven; "you will have none but yourself to blame, madam, when the thread breaks which holds a sword suspended over your head."

"Gentlemen, gentlemen, pray have patience," interposed Sir Robert, "and make some allowance for one who, having commanded all her life, must now obey."

"In Heaven's name, then, remain with her!"

said Lindsay, turning angrily away, "and try to obtain by your sooth tongue and honeyed words what she refuses to our frank and outspoken demands. In a quarter of an hour we will return—and the answer must be ready."

The two noblemen went out leaving Melvil alone with the Queen, and their steps could be numbered by the clang of Lindsay's great sword against each stair as they descended; when sure that they were out of earshot, Sir Robert threw himself at the Queen's feet.

"Your Majesty," said he, "regretted a few moments since you had not followed Lord Herries' and my brother's advice. I assure your Grace that the counsel I am about to offer is equally good, and that if you disregard it you will bitterly repent. Ah, your Majesty, you cannot tell what may happen—you do not comprehend what treachery your brother is capable of."

"It seems to me," replied Mary, "that I have just been enlightened upon that subject. What more can he do? I should welcome a public trial; let them but leave me free to plead my own cause and you will see that there is not a judge in Scotland who will dare condemn me."

"For that very reason they will be careful to give you no such opportunity, madame; for it would be the height of folly when they have you safe in this isolated castle, guarded by your enemies and with no witness but God, who avenges crimes but does not prevent them. Remember Machiavelli's words: 'A king's tomb is never far from his prison.' You come of a family who die young, and almost always a violent death: two of your ancestors perished by the sword and one by poison."

"Ah! if death were swift and painless," cried Mary, "I would accept it as an expiation of my faults: for, though I am proud enough before my enemies, I am humble when I search my conscience. I am unjustly accused of complicity in Darnley's murder, but I am rightly censured for marrying Bothwell."

"Time flies, madame, time flies!" cried Melvil, glancing at the hour-glass which stood on the table. "They will soon be back, and this time your Majesty must answer them. Be guided by me, I implore you, and make the best that you can of your plight. You are here alone with a single female attendant, without friends, protectors, or influence;

an abdication signed under such circumstances will never appear to your subjects like a voluntary act, but always like a compulsory one; and should the day dawn when you are able to protest against it you will have two witnesses to the duress under which you acted: one will be Mary Seaton, and the other," he added in a low tone, glancing uneasily at the door—"the other will be Robert Melvil."

He had hardly finished speaking when his companions were heard mounting the stairs, returning before the alloted time had expired. A moment later the door was thrown open and Ruthven appeared, closely followed by Lindsay.

"Madam," said the former, "we have returned for your answer."

"Yes," said Lindsay, pushing Lord Ruthven aside and approaching the table, "and we want a clear, precise, positive answer, without any mental reservations."

"You are exacting, my lord," answered the Queen. "You would hardly have the right to expect so much of me were I on the other side of Lochleven surrounded by a faithful escort, but within these prison walls you would not believe me if I

swore I signed freely. However, you desire my signature—and you shall have it; Melvil, hand me a pen."

"I hope, nevertheless," said Lord Ruthven, "that your Grace does not contemplate entering a protest at some future time against the validity of your signature, based upon your present position?"

The Queen had already dipped her pen in the ink and bent to write, but as Lord Ruthven finished speaking she rose haughtily to her feet and let the pen fall from her hand:

"My lord," she said passionately, "a few moments ago you simply asked for an abdication, and I was about to grant your request, but if a postscriptum is to be joined to the act, stating that I renounce the crown of Scotland freely, judging myself unworthy to sit thereon, then I will not sign. No, not for the three crowns which have been stolen from me one after another!"

"Beware, madam!" shouted Lindsay, seizing the Queen's arm with his gauntleted hand and pressing it with the strength of his anger; "beware, for our patience is at an end, and we might end by breaking that which will not bend."

The Queen remained standing, and, though a red wave of wrath swept across her fair face, she neither spoke nor moved, but her eyes rested with such an expression of scorn and contempt upon the brutal earl, that, ashamed of the rage to which he had yielded and the length to which it had carried him, he released her arm and fell back a step. Turning up her sleeve and pointing to the crimson bruises upon her white skin, the Queen said haughtily:

"This, gentlemen, is what I anticipated, and nothing now prevents my signing; yes, I freely abdicate the throne and crown of Scotland, and here is the proof that I was not coerced."

She then picked up the pen and rapidly signed both documents, handed them to Lord Ruthven, and with a stately salute walked slowly to her chamber door, followed by Mary Seaton.

Ruthven watched her until she disappeared. "Well," he said, "we have secured her signature, and although the method of persuasion you adopted, Lindsay, is not habitually used by diplomats, it was none the less efficacious."

"A truce to jokes, Ruthven," replied the rough soldier, "for she is a noble creature, and had I

dared I would have thrown myself at her feet and begged her pardon."

"There is still time," sneered Ruthven, "and in her present plight I fancy her Grace will not be too hard-hearted. Posssibly she meditates calling for some champion to uphold her innocence in the lists, and in that case you are just the man to change the face of affairs."

"That will do, Ruthven," returned Lindsay angrily; "this is neither the time nor place for such pleasantry. But I will tell you one thing: if I were as convinced of her innocence as I am of her guilt, no living man, not even the Regent, should harm a hair of her head."

"The devil!" exclaimed Ruthven. "I never dreamed you were so impressionable. You remember the story of Achilles' lance, whose rust healed the wounds it had made? Go you and do likewise, my lord."

"Enough, Ruthven, enough," Lindsay rejoined. "You resemble a cuirass of Milan steel, which is lighter and a thousand times more brilliant than our dull Scottish armor, yet far more difficult to pierce. We understand each other, Ruthven, so a truce to raillery." With that he strode from the

room, followed by Ruthven and Melvil, the former with an affected air of insolent indifference, the latter with sad face and drooping head, not even attempting to disguise the painful impression made by the scene just enacted.

Mary remained in her chamber until evening, when she took a seat by the window looking upon the lake; at the accustomed hour she beheld the light twinkle cheerily in the little cottage on Kinross, and for a long and weary month it was her only consolation, and she drew courage nightly from its steady, faithful flame.

At last, as she had about despaired of George Douglas' return, she went to her window one morning and immediately uttered a cry of delight. Mary Seaton ran to her side and the Queen silently pointed to a little skiff anchored not far from the shore; in it were George and the boy Douglas indulging in their favorite amusement. The young man had arrived the night before, but as every one was accustomed to his unannounced arrivals, the sentinel did not even sound the horn, and the Queen had not dreamed that, at last, her friend was near her.

Three days passed, however, before she saw the

young man save, as at first, upon the lake. He spent all his time on the water, from whence he could watch the Queen's windows and encourage the captive by smiles and an occasional furtive signal.

At last, on the fourth morning after his return, Mary was awakened by the baying of hounds and the sound of horns. She flew to the window, for everything interests a prisoner, and saw William Douglas embarking with his dogs, whippers-in, and huntsmen, to indulge for one day in an occupation more in accordance with his rank and birth than the duties he had so conscientiously fulfilled.

The Queen trembled with joy, for she hoped that Lady Douglas was still too incensed to undertake William's duties and that George would replace him. She was not disappointed; at the usual time she heard the steps of those who brought her breakfast, the door opened, and George entered, preceded by the servants who carried the meal. He barely saluted the Queen, and she returned his bow with a disdainful air, but when the servants had left the room she exclaimed joyously:

"At last you have returned!"

Signing her to be silent, he crossed the room and listened at the door of the antechamber until assured that no one had remained to spy upon him; then he knelt before Mary, kissed her hand respectfully, and said:

"Yes, your Majesty, I am back at last, and, thank Heaven, I bring good news."

"Ah, tell it me quickly," said the Queen, "for life within these walls is torture, and I sorely need encouragement. You know who has been here, I presume, and that I was forced to sign an abdication."

"Yes, madam, and we know that it was by violence that your signature was obtained, and, if possible, our devotion is the greater because of what your Grace has undergone."

"What have you accomplished?"

"The Seatons and Hamiltons, who, as your Majesty knows, are your most faithful allies,"—the Queen turned and held out her hand to Mary Seaton with an affectionate smile—"have already mustered their troops and are ready to move at the first signal. But, as their forces alone are not sufficiently strong to take the field, they will advance directly to Dumbarton, whose governor is

friendly, and the situation and strength of that place will enable them to hold out against Murray until all the faithful hearts in Scotland have time to rally round your standard there."

"I see the wisdom of the plan," said the Queen, "and have no fear as to what we shall do when I have regained my liberty; but how am I to escape from here?"

"That too is planned," George responded, "but the success of the scheme depends on your Majesty's courage and coolness."

"If I am only required to display courage and self-possession," returned Mary, "you have naught to fear from me, for neither the one nor the other ever failed me."

"Here is a file," continued George, handing the tool to Mary Seaton, as if he deemed it unworthy to touch the Queen's hands, "and this evening I will bring the cords with which to make a ladder, and you must cut through one of the bars in that window, which is only twenty feet from the ground; and on the night set for your escape I will mount by it, both to test its strength and to assist you to descend; one of the garrison is in my pay and will open the door in the garden wall, at

which he is on guard—once outside you will be safe."

"And for what night must we be ready?" inquired the Queen eagerly.

"That I cannot tell your Majesty yet," answered George, "for we must wait for two things: first, until a sufficient escort is assembled at Kinross to insure your Grace's safety; secondly, until it is Warden's turn to take the night watch at the postern through which you must pass to freedom."

"How will you know when the time comes?—shall you remain in the castle?"

"No, madam, for here I am a useless, perhaps a dangerous, friend, while on the other side of the lake I can aid you effectively."

"But how will you know when Warden's turn of duty arrives?"

"I shall have a signal: the weathercock of the north tower, instead of turning in the wind like the others, will remain fixed."

"And I," inquired Mary anxiously, "how shall I be informed?"

"That too is provided for; the light which shines nightly from Kinross and tells you that your

friends are ever on the watch, will be your informant. When you wish to know whether the hour of your deliverance is near, or is still uncertain, set a light in this window overlooking the moor, and the other will then immediately disappear. Then lay your hand against your heart and count its beats, and if they number twenty before the beacon shines again you will know that no date has been set; if you have counted but ten, you may know that the hour is near; if but five, you will understand that your escape is to be made on the following night; but if the light does not reappear at all, you may know that the time has come and must make your preparations at once. In the latter case the hoot of an owl, twice repeated from the court-yard, will be your signal to let down the ladder."

"Ah, Douglas!" exclaimed the Queen, giving him her hand to kiss, "you alone could have foreseen and provided for everything, and I am grateful beyond words for your devotion."

A vivid blush mantled the young man's features, but with an effort he mastered his emotion and repressed the desire to speak of the passion that consumed him; he knelt humbly before Mary and

kissed her hand with such respectful devotion that no one could have seen in the action anything more than the homage of loyalty and fidelity; he then left the room, fearing a more protracted stay might arouse suspicion.

At dinner-time Douglas brought a piece of rope, as he had promised, and late that night Mary Seaton, according to instructions, let it fall from the window which looked on the court-yard, and he attached another piece of sufficient length to make the ladder, which she managed to draw up without attracting attention, and on the following day the young man left the castle.

The Queen and Mary Seaton lost no time in making the rope ladder, and completed it on the third day after Douglas' visit; that evening, rather to assure herself of the vigilance of her adherents than from hope that the hour of her deliverance was at hand, the Queen placed a lamp in the designated window; instantly, as Douglas had promised, the light in Kinross disappeared and Mary counted up to twenty-two before it shone again; her rescuers were faithful, but nothing was decided on.

For a week she questioned the cheering beacon

with the same result, but on the eighth evening the light reappeared as she counted eleven.

Unable to believe that she was not mistaken, Mary waited an hour and then again set her signal in the window; her unknown correspondent comprehended that she was questioning anew and promptly withdrew his light, but before she had counted twelve the star of hope shone again in the distance. There was no longer room for doubt, her friends had determined upon their plans. The Queen passed a sleepless night; the patient persistence and devotion of her friends moved her to tears of gratitude, while the knowledge that she must soon make so desperate an attempt rendered her nervous and tremulous. When day dawned she woke her companion and questioned her repeatedly to assure herself that the occurrence of the previous evening was not all a dream. Every sound startled her and seemed to indicate that the plan upon which her liberty depended had been discovered, and when William Douglas entered her apartment at breakfast-time she hardly dared look at him lest she should see in his eyes that all was lost.

For five nights the indications remained the

same, but on the sixth the light disappeared before the Queen had counted five, on perceiving which she sank into Mary Seaton's arms faint with excitement; her escape was to be effected the following evening. After a little she repeated the signal, and received the same reply, so that there was no room for doubt. All was in readiness, save the prisoner's courage; that failed for an instant, and had not Mary Seaton supported her to a chair she would have fallen helplessly to the floor; but, the first intense agitation passed, she recovered her self-possession, and became stronger and more determined than ever.

The Queen remained at her post of observation until midnight, her eyes fixed upon the blessed ray of hope; at last Mary Seaton persuaded her to retire, promising, if she could not sleep, to read some of M. Ronsard's poems aloud; but the Queen did not care to listen to any secular work at that solemn moment and requested her to read from the prayer-book; she made all the responses as if she was at church, but toward dawn she fell asleep, and Mary Seaton, exhausted, slept in her chair by the bedside.

She was wakened a few hours later by the touch

of a hand on her shoulder; it was the Queen, who was already up and dressed.

"Come, dearest," she said, "and see what a beautiful day God has sent us; it seems as if all nature smiled upon my undertaking. Surely Heaven is on my side."

"Madam," responded her companion, "I had rather the weather was less fine and promised a darker night. It is darkness rather than light we must pray for."

"Listen, dear," answered the Queen, "it is by that token that we shall know if God is really for us. If the weather remains clear I shall believe that He has abandoned me, but if it becomes overcast I shall be convinced that He protects me."

Mary Seaton smiled and nodded in approbation of her mistress' superstitious suggestion, and the Queen, unable to keep quiet, began to move restlessly about the rooms, collecting the few jewels and articles of value she had preserved, and selecting a black gown for the evening, which was destined to aid the night in concealing her flight. These preparations completed, she took her post at the window and remained gazing at the little cottage, which, as usual, appeared desolate and uninhabited.

Her heart was so full of pleasant anticipations that when William Douglas arrived with the breakfast she received him with unwonted graciousness, and it was with the greatest difficulty that she maintained her customary reserve and remained seated for the length of time usually consumed by the meal. However, she controlled her nervousness, and William retired apparently unconscious of her agitation. As soon as the door closed behind her jailor, Mary flew back to the window; she thirsted for the free air and gazed hungrily upon the vast expanse of country spread out before her, anticipating the moment when she should tread the heather as free as the birds which flew joyously past her windows; it seemed to her that once she had gained her liberty she would never again immure herself within palace walls, but would pass her days roaming through the fields and woods. In the midst of her day-dreams she was frequently seized with a strange fear, a chill sense of utter helplessness; at such moments she turned to Mary Seaton for encouragement and support, and the girl spoke cheerful, hopeful words, but rather from a sense of duty than from conviction.

The hours dragged slowly by; toward evening the Queen observed light clouds gathering on the horizon, and called her companion to witness the evidence of God's protection. While the captives watched the sky the dinner-hour arrived, and the Queen was again constrained to a half-hour of dissimulation, which was the more disagreeable, as, doubtless from gratitude for her Majesty's amiability at breakfast, William Douglas thought himself obliged to make several complimentary speeches, which forced Mary to pay him more attention than her preoccupation inclined her to; however, Douglas did not appear to notice her absent-mindedness, and everything passed off smoothly as at breakfast.

When he had retired the Queen again interrogated the heavens; the clouds which had floated lightly across the sky an hour before had thickened and spread until the azure had given place to a dull gray pall; night closed in early and the beacon shone as usual, but upon the Queen's signaling it instantly vanished, and, although she watched until nine o'clock, not a glimmer was again visible.

The castle bell rang ten o'clock, the sentinels

were relieved, and Mary heard the patrol pass under her window; their footsteps died away and all was silence once more; an hour crawled by, and then, suddenly, an owl's mournful cry rose from the garden; the supreme moment had come, and the Queen's strength and courage sprang up to meet it. She whispered to Mary Seaton to remove the filed bar and lower the ladder; then, extinguishing the light and taking the little casket which contained her valuables, she waited silently for George Douglas' appearance.

After a few moments, which seemed incredibly long to the waiting women, a dark form climbed through the window and a familiar voice whispered:

"Is your Majesty ready?"

"Yes," answered Mary in the same low tone.

"Then all is well, madam, for your friends await you on the other side of the lake, Warden guards the postern, and God has sent us a dark night."

By way of response the Queen extended her hand, which George bent the knee to kiss and lifted to his lips, but as he touched it he started, for it was icy cold and trembling.

"In heaven's name, madam," he exclaimed, "be brave, you *must* not falter now."

"Our Lady of Succor, be thou our helper," murmured Mary.

"Call upon the spirits of your royal ancestors for aid," said George, "for at this moment it is not Christian resignation you need, but queenly courage and resolution."

"Oh, Douglas, Douglas," murmured Mary plaintively, "an astrologer once prophesied that I would die a violent death in prison; has not the hour arrived when his prophecy is to be fulfilled?"

"Perhaps so," answered George coolly, "but it is better to die courageously, and like a queen, than to live in this old castle a calumniated prisoner."

"You are right," said the Queen, "but a woman is a creature of impulse and must yield to her nature; forgive my feminine fears." Then, after a moment's silence, she added, "Come, I am ready."

George at once returned to the window, and, having assured himslf that the ladder was firmly attached, stepped out upon it, grasping the bar firmly with one hand and holding out the other to

the Queen. She had just stepped on a stool and poised one foot on the casement, when a cry of "Who goes there?" rang out from the foot of the tower. Mary instinctively drew back into the room; George, on the contrary, clung to the ladder, striving to pierce the darkness and see who uttered the challenge. A moment later a shot was fired and at the same instant the alarm bell clamored loudly, while cries of "Treason! Treason!" and "To arms! to arms!" resounded on all sides of the castle.

"Yes, treason!" cried George, leaping back into the room; "that scoundrel Warden has betrayed us."

Then running to the Queen's side, apparently unmoved by his own danger, he said hastily:

"Do not lose heart, your Majesty, for all hope is not lost, and no matter what happens now—and you will probably never see me again—remember you still have a friend within these walls in the person of my little cousin."

He had barely finished speaking when the door was burst open, and William and Lady Douglas, followed by a crowd of soldiers and servants bearing torches, rushed into the room.

"There, mother," cried William, pointing to his brother, who stood before the Queen shielding her with his body, "are you convinced? Do you believe me now?"

For a moment the old lady seemed unable to speak; she turned deadly pale and tore at the ruff round her throat as if choking; then, tottering forward, she cried:

"Speak, my son, speak, and clear yourself of the charge which impugns your honor! Say simply, 'A Douglas never fails in his duty,' and I will believe you."

"Yes, mother," interrupted William, "a Douglas invariably does his duty, but this man is no Douglas!"

"O God!" cried Lady Douglas, "give me strength to bear the sorrow which one son has brought upon me, and patience to endure the insults of the other. O woman born under a baleful star," she continued passionately, addressing the Queen, "when will you cease to be a tool in the hands of the devil for the ruin and destruction of all who approach you? Cursed be the hour when you crossed my threshold!"

"Do not say that, mother," exclaimed George,

"but rather bless her Majesty's coming, which has proved that if there are some of Douglas blood who have forgotten the fealty a subject owes his sovereign, there are others who are still loyal."

"Douglas! Douglas!" murmured Mary, "did I not predict this?"

"And did I not answer," returned George, "that any loyal subject would feel it an honor and a joy to lay down his life for you?"

"Then die!" cried his brother, rushing upon him with uplifted sword. George sprang to one side, and drawing his weapon with a movement as swift as thought and instinct with hate, stood on the defensive.

"Not another movement, William Douglas!" cried the Queen, throwing herself between them, "and you, George, put up your sword, or, if you must use it to make good your escape, let it be against any but your brother. I still have need of your life, so guard it well."

"My life, like my sword and my honor, are at your disposition, madam, and as ever I obey your commands."

While speaking he glanced sharply round the room, noting the position of every one present, and

as he uttered the last word he suddenly darted to the door, crying to those who stood in his path:

"Make way, if you value your lives!"

"Stop him," cried William Douglas, "seize him, dead or alive! Fire on him—kill him like a dog!"

Two or three soldiers, fearing to disobey, feigned to pursue the young man, one or two shots were heard without the castle, and a voice cried that he had thrown himself into the lake.

"He has escaped!" cried William furiously.

The Queen heaved a sigh of relief, and the old lady lifted her eyes toward heaven, while her lips moved as if in thanksgiving.

"That is right, mother," snarled William; "thank God for your bastard's escape, for it brings lasting disgrace upon the name of Douglas. From this hour we shall all be looked upon as accomplices in his treason."

"Have pity on me, William," moaned Lady Douglas, wringing her hands; "in God's name have mercy on your old mother! Do you not see that this has almost killed me?"

Even as she spoke she staggered back, pale and

trembling, and would have fallen had not the old steward sprung to her assistance.

"I think, my lord," said Mary Seaton, "that your mother requires your attention as much as her Majesty needs rest; do you not think you had better withdraw?"

"Ay, that you may have time to weave new webs and think whom you may ensnare! Very well, do your best, you have seen that it is not easy to fool William Douglas; play your game and I will play mine. Begone, all of you," he added, turning toward the servants and soldiers who still filled the room; then, passing an arm round his mother, who was scarcely able to stand, he departed, and the Queen heard him lock and bolt the door of her prison.

Left alone the two women looked at each other in mute despair, and the Queen threw herself into a chair and sobbed as if her heart would break. Pride had sustained her in the face of her enemies, but once alone the horror of her situation appalled and overwhelmed her; dethroned and a prisoner in that impregnable fortress, with no friend save a mere child, whom she had hardly noticed, what remained to her of her two thrones and her two-

fold power? Alas, only her name was left. With that, were she at liberty, she might have shaken Scotland to its foundations, but immured in Lochleven, with only a child for a connecting link between her and her friends and future hopes, what good could it do her? It must gradually fade from the hearts of her partisans, and would, perhaps even during her lifetime, be shrouded in oblivion as in a winding-sheet. Such a thought was torture to so proud a nature as Mary Stuart's, whose organization needed light and sunshine like a flower.

Happily the best beloved of her four Mary's was still at her side, and tender, faithful, and devoted strove to comfort and encourage her. But it was no light task at this moment, and her grief-stricken mistress responded only with sobs and tears to her loving attentions and hopeful words, and she had almost given up in despair, when, glancing toward the window, she saw the friendly beacon shining in the distance.

"Look, your Grace, look!" she cried, raising the Queen in her arms and pointing to the never-failing emblem of hope, "see, the beacon is still shining; you are not yet friendless."

"My God, I thank thee," murmured Mary, falling on her knees. "Through thy mercy Douglas is safe, and friends still watch over me."

From that night the Queen was truly a prisoner; she was not permitted to enter the garden save under the surveillance of two soldiers, and the constraint of this arrangement was so irksome and humiliating, that she relinquished her sole distraction and secluded herself in her apartments, taking a certain bitter pride in the extent of her misery.

A fortnight after the events we have just described, as her Majesty and Mary Seaton were sitting over their tapestry one evening, a stone thrown from the garden passed between the window bars and fell upon the floor; the Queen first supposed that it was either an accident or an insult, but on picking up the missile Mary Seaton discovered that it was wrapped in a piece of paper; she carefully unrolled it and, smoothing out the creases, laid it before her mistress, who read the following:

"Your Majesty commanded me to preserve my life and I obeyed, and your Grace knows by the light at Kinross that your devoted servants still watch

over you. In order not to rouse suspicion, the soldiers who were assembled here on that calamitous night were dispersed at daybreak, and they will not be reassembled here until another attempt to liberate you renders their presence necessary. It would be disastrous to make such an attempt at present, when your Majesty's jailers are on their guard; we will, therefore, permit them to take every precaution, and wait until time and security have lulled their fears; but we shall never cease to watch over your Grace or to pray and plan for your liberation. I beseech your Majesty to be patient and not to lose courage. G. D."

"Oh, brave and loyal heart!" exclaimed the Queen; "he is more steadfast in our misfortune than others were in our prosperity; may Heaven reward his kindness to the captive. Yes, I will be patient and courageous, and while that light shines I will believe I shall yet be free."

This letter restored all Mary's courage, for it not only proved the unwearying devotion of her friends, but that she could communicate with them through little Douglas. She lost no time in writing a letter to George wherein she charged him to convey her gratitude to the nobles who had signed the pro-

test, and to implore them, in the name of the faith they had sworn her, not to grow cold in her service, and promising, on her own part, to await the result of their efforts with the patience and courage which they enjoined upon her.

The ensuing morning she observed little Douglas playing in the garden, and after a few moments he came to the foot of the tower and set to work fashioning a snare for birds. The Queen looked to see if she was observed, and having made sure that the garden was deserted, dropped the stone in which she had enveloped her letter. At first she feared she had erred, for the boy did not move at the noise of the falling stone, and it was not for some minutes—during which the prisoner's heart throbbed anxiously—that he turned indifferently and, as if searching for something needed in his work, picked up the stone, nonchalantly stuffed it into his pocket, and continued to work at the trap as though he had no interest in life save its proper adjustment; thus showing the Queen, by a self-control beyond his years, what a trustworthy messenger he was.

From that moment Mary took a new hold on hope; but days, weeks, and months passed without

altering her situation. Winter came and she saw the snow lie deep on plain and mountain, while the lake offered her a solid road on which to pass to freedom, but not a single letter reached her and it was only by the beacon which shone nightly that she knew her friends were faithful.

Nature had wakened from her deathlike sleep, a few furtive rays of sunlight had pierced the sombre, Scottish sky, the snow had melted, the lake broken its icy chains, and the first green buds appeared before the Queen received a second message from the outer world. One night, as she sat wistfully gazing toward the open moorland, she was startled by the unusual fluctuations of the beacon; surmising that her unseen friend had something to tell she set a light in her window, upon which the signal vanished, but it flashed up again as she counted eleven, and almost simultaneously a stone flew through the window and fell at her feet: like its predecessor it was wrapped in a letter from George Douglas.

"Summon all your courage," he wrote, "for the time is at hand and your friends are assembled. To-morrow night at eleven o'clock drop a cord from your window, and draw up the package which will be attached to it."

The superfluous cord from the rope ladder still remained hidden in the Queen's chamber, and on the following night the captives, leaving their lamp in the bedroom so that its rays might not betray them, dropped the cord from the window. After a moment Mary Seaton, who held the rope, perceived from its movements that something was being attached, and a sharp jerk presently warned her to pull it up; she succeeded in raising a large package to the level of the window, but then discovered that it was too bulky to be taken through the bars. The Queen, however, came to her assistance and unfastened the bundle, and they then drew in the articles one by one. Hastily securing the rope, they carried everything into the bedroom and after barricading the door began their inventory; the contents of the package proved to be two complete suits of Douglas livery. Completely nonplussed, they helplessly turned the garments over and over, until, finally, Mary Seaton discovered a slip of paper sewn to the collar of one of the doublets and tearing it open they read as follows:

"Sheer audacity alone will enable your Majesty to regain your liberty; we therefore beg your Majesty to read this letter carefully, and should you

deign to accept the proposed plan, to follow the instructions herein given minutely.

"The castle keys never leave the old steward's belt until curfew has rung and he has gone the rounds of the castle and assured himself that every door and window is securely fastened; he then remits them to William Douglas, who if he is on guard attaches them to his sword-belt, and if he sleeps lays them under his pillow.

"Little Douglas has long been allowed to work at the armorer's forge in the castle, and for the past five months he has been surreptitiously forging a set of keys, sufficiently like the genuine ones to deceive William if the substitution can be effected. Yesterday he completed his task, and as soon as a favorable opportunity presents itself he will make the exchange, and going to your Majesty's apartment he will open your doors and conduct your Grace and Miss Seaton out of the castle to a boat which will await you. By nightly interrogating the signal your Grace will be made aware of the appointed time, and up to that night, both in order to accustom yourselves to the costume and to give the liveries the appearance of having been worn, your Majesty and Miss Seaton are requested

to wear them nightly from nine o'clock until midnight. It is, moreover, desirous that you should be prepared to escape upon a moment's notice, as little Douglas may have an unexpected chance of getting you out of Lochleven.

"The clothes should be a perfect fit for your Majesty and your attendant, as Miss Mary Fleming and Miss Mary Livingstone, who are much the same figures, were measured for them.

"We cannot impress too strongly upon your Majesty the necessity for that coolness and courage of which you have proved yourself possessed upon previous occasions."

The captives were astounded by the daring of this plan and gazed at each other in consternation, for it seemed to them that success was out of the question; nevertheless they tried on their disguises, and found that they did indeed fit perfectly.

Obedient to the instructions contained in the letter, the prisoners regularly questioned the light and donned their liveries, but for a whole tedious month they received no news; at last, however, on the morning of the 2d of May, 1568, the Queen was awakened by the notes of a bugle, and hastening to her usual post of observation she beheld a

band of cavaliers, displaying the Douglas banner, standing on the lake shore; as she watched boats were hurriedly manned and dispatched to bring them to the castle.

Mary was greatly alarmed, for at that juncture the least change in the regular routine of Lochleven was to be dreaded, as it might overthrow all their carefully laid plans. Her apprehension redoubled as the boats neared the castle and she recognized, standing in the foremost, Lord Douglas, husband of the chatelaine of Lochleven, and father of William and George; the old noble, who was Guardian of the Marches in the North, had returned to his old home for the first time in three years. His coming was a great event for the inhabitants of the fortress, and shortly after he entered the castle the old steward ceremoniously announced his arrival to the Queen and invited her to grace the dinner to be given that night in celebration of his master's return; whether from instinct or repugnance Mary refused.

Lord Douglas was a true feudal seignior and travelled with a princely retinue; the old castle was filled with unwonted life and bustle; strange squires, soldiers, and servants passed continually

below the Queen's window, and she observed that the servants wore livery like that sent to herself and companion.

The Queen waited with feverish impatience for night The evening before she had questioned the signal and been informed that the time was near; now she was apprehensive that Lord Douglas' return had deranged all their arrangements, and that the light, when it appeared, would announce a postponement; therefore, the instant she perceived the distant gleam she signalled it; the beacon immediately disappeared and the Queen, greatly agitated, began to count. She reached fifty without its reappearing, then terrified at the mere thought of such a perilous undertaking, and almost unwilling to believe it was at hand, she turned away and began to pace the room nervously. At the end of a half-hour she again strove to question her unknown friend but obtained no response; the cottage on Kinross remained wrapped in darkness—the escape was certainly to be attempted that very night.

Little dreaming that such a venture would be essayed that night, the prisoners had neglected to don male attire; trembling between hope and fear

they hastened to the Queen's bedroom, barricaded the door, and hurriedly changed petticoats and crinoline for doublet and hose. Their toilets were barely completed when the sound of a key grating in the lock reached their ears; blowing out their light they clung to each other and waited in suspense for the intruder to reveal himself. Light steps crossed the drawing-room floor, some one tapped gently; the Queen asked "Who is there?" and a child's voice answered with the words of an old ballad:

"Douglas, Douglas,
Tender and true."

It was the countersign George Douglas had given them, and the Queen threw wide the door.

The drawing-room was in darkness; but the boy stretched out his hand until it touched the Queen's, and in the soft light of the summer's night Mary Stuart saw the gallant little fellow kneel before her, and felt the touch of his lips upon her fingers.

"Is your Majesty prepared to follow me?" the lad asked in a whisper as he rose.

"Yes, my child," answered Mary, "but is it really to be to-night?"

"With your Majesty's permission, yes."

"Is everything ready?"

"All is arranged."

"What have we to do?"

"Simply follow me wherever I go."

"O merciful God!" cried Mary, "have pity on us." Then, falling upon her knees she prayed silently, while Mary Seaton secured the casket which contained her Majesty's jewels and made the final preparations for their flight, while the boy stood patiently, almost reverently, watching.

Finally the Queen rose; "I am ready," she said quietly, "and you, dearest?"

"I too," answered Mary Seaton firmly.

"Come then," said the boy. He led the way and the prisoners followed, the Queen going first and Mary Seaton keeping close behind her.

Their young conductor carefully locked the door after them, so that when the guard passed he should see nothing amiss, and they then began to descend the winding stairs; when half-way down wild bursts of laughter, a confusion of voices, and the click of glasses reached their ears; and the Queen, laying a hand on her guide's shoulder, asked unsteadily:

"Where are you leading us?"

"Out of the castle," he replied concisely.

"But we must pass through the great hall."

"We must indeed, madam, and that is exactly what George foresaw and provided for. In the crowd of servants wearing the same livery as your Majesty, you will pass unnoticed."

"Oh, blessed Virgin!" murmured the Queen, leaning against the wall.

"For God's sake take courage, madam," whispered Mary Seaton, "or we are lost."

"You are right," responded the Queen in the same tone, "let us go on."

At the foot of the stairs little Douglas stopped, and taking a stone jug filled with wine, presented it to the Queen.

"Place this upon your right shoulder," he said, "it will conceal your face from those at the table, and if you are carrying something you will be less liable to notice. You, Miss Seaton, must give me that casket, and carry this basket of bread upon your head—steady it with your right hand—so—that is right. Now are you ready, and are you equal to what lies before you?"

"Yes," the two women answered simultaneously.

"Then follow me, but do not appear to notice me."

The boy continued his course, and after a few steps the fugitives found themselves in a kind of antechamber leading to the great hall; a number of servants were busy there, but as none of them paid the least attention to the Queen she was somewhat encouraged and followed little Douglas into the banquet hall with a firm step.

Lord Douglas and his guests were seated at a long table graduated according to their rank; dessert had just been served and the company had therefore reached the gayest part of the supper, and, occupied with one another and the good cheer before them, paid scant attention to what passed in the room. Moreover the hall was so vast that the lamps and candles which burned upon the table did not suffice to illuminate it, and while it was bright about the guests, the sides of the room were but poorly lighted. The Queen and her attendant mingled with the numerous servants waiting upon the revellers, and each one being intent upon his task they traversed the apartment unobserved and entered a vestibule corresponding to that on the opposite side. Here the Queen set down her jug

ESCAPE OF MARIE STUART

and Mary Seaton her basket; they then followed the child down a corridor opening into the court-yard. A sentinel was posted at the entrance, but he paid no attention to them, and they followed their guide across the court; on the opposite side they were obliged to stop until he found the key which opened the garden door; it was a moment of inexpressible suspense, but finally the lock yielded, the door swung open, and the prisoners precipitated themselves into the garden, and paused in the shadow of the trees to recover confidence, while the boy cautiously relocked the door.

When they were half-way across the enclosure the boy raised his hand and signed for them to stop; laying the casket and keys upon the grass, he raised his hands to his mouth and uttered a cry so precisely like that of an owl that it was almost impossible to believe a human voice had made the sound; then, picking up the casket and keys, he continued his course on tiptoe, listening intently the while.

On reaching the wall at the extremity of the garden he paused a second time, and waited with evident anxiety; the silence was unbroken save by the laughter which rang out from the banquet hall,

the soughing of the wind in the trees and the lapping of the water on the pebbly beach beyond the wall; suddenly a moan was heard, then a sound like that of a body falling, and a moment later an owl hooted thrice.

"It is done," said Little Douglas coolly, "come on."

"What is done," demanded the Queen, "and what was that groan we heard?"

"There was a sentinel at the postern," responded the boy, "but he is not there now."

The Queen shuddered, and cold drops stood on her forehead; she understood that a life had been sacrificed for her. Trembling in every limb, she leaned upon Mary Seaton, whose strength was nearly exhausted, and as they gazed in affright in each other's faces little Douglas tranquilly tried to unlock the postern, and at last it swung on its hinges.

"The Queen?" whispered a voice from the other side.

"She is here," answered the boy.

George Douglas, for it was he, sprang into the garden and, throwing one arm about the Queen and the other round Mary Seaton, almost carried

them to the border of the lake; as she passed the door the Queen looked uneasily about her and espied a dark, shapeless mass huddled at the foot of the wall, at sight of which she shuddered violently:

"Do not pity him, madam," whispered George, "for Heaven's justice has overtaken him. That man was the scoundrel, Warden, who betrayed us."

"Alas," murmured the Queen, "guilty though he was, he nevertheless came to his death because of me."

"When your safety is in question, madam, your friends cannot stop to haggle over the shedding of ignoble blood," answered Douglas. "But hush! we must be careful. This way, Willie, keep close in the shadow of the wall; the boat lies but ten feet distant."

With that he drew the fugitives along more swiftly, and all arrived in safety at the place where a little boat awaited them in the shadow of one of the great towers; at their approach four oarsmen, who were lying on the boat's bottom, rose to their feet, and one of them leaped ashore and drew the little craft up so that the Queen and her companion could step aboard. Douglas seated them at

the bow, the boy took his place at the tiller, and George, with his foot on the beach, gave a vigorous push, which sent the boat well out on to the water, and in an instant they were skimming over the lake.

"Now," exclaimed George exultingly, "you are out of danger, for they might as well pursue a sea-swallow across the Firth of Solway as to try to overtake us. Pull, boys, pull! never mind who hears us; the important thing is to get well away from the castle."

"Who goes there?" cried a voice from the tower.

"Pull with all your might, boys," said Douglas.

"A boat! a boat!" shouted the sentinel. "Treason! treason! To arms! to arms!"

An instant later a flame illuminated the lake and a bullet whistled over their heads; the Queen gave a smothered shriek, although she was in no danger, for George had taken his position directly in front of her and shielded her completely with his body.

Lochleven's alarm bell was now ringing madly, lights flashed from window to window, and a con-

fused clamor of voices reached their ears as they sped across the water.

"Courage, lads," cried Douglas. "Row as if your lives hung on every stroke, for the skiff will be after us in five minutes."

"They won't come as soon as you think, George," said little Douglas, chuckling softly, "for I carefully locked every door behind us, and it will take some time to open them with the keys I left. As for these," he continued, holding up those he had so adroitly pilfered, "I present them to Kelpie, and name her porter of Lochleven Castle."

The thunder of a small piece of artillery replied to the boy's pleasantry, but the night was too dark for the gunner to aim accurately at such a distance, and the ball ricocheted along the surface of the lake full fifty feet from the boat, while its echo rang from shore to shore and died away in the distance. George Douglas, drawing a pistol from his belt, fired into the air, not in a vain, braggardly response to the castle's menace, but as a signal that the Queen was safe to the troop of faithful friends who waited her on the further side of the lake. Immediately, regardless of the danger arising from the proximity of Kinross village, shouts

of joy rent the air, and a moment later the boat touched shore at the appointed landing-place.

Douglas bounded ashore and extended his hand to the Queen, who sprang lightly out on the sands and immediately knelt to render thanks to Heaven for her deliverance.

Rising she found herself surrounded by her most devoted adherents; Hamilton, Herries, and Lord Seaton, Mary's father. Wild with joy she seized their hands and stammered out her thanks in broken words, which expressed more eloquently than the most elegant periods her delight and gratitude. Suddenly, observing that the Douglases stood aloof, she called them to her side and, taking their hands, said:

"Gentlemen, here are my liberators, to whom, as long as I live, I shall owe a debt of gratitude which nothing can pay."

"Madam," responded Douglas, "we have all simply done our duty, and he who has risked most is the happiest. But permit me to say that your Majesty should not waste a moment in idle talk."

"Douglas is right," observed Lord Seaton, "let us be off!"

Four couriers were at once dispatched in differ-

ent directions to announce the Queen's escape to her friends, and then the little band, which was composed of about forty men, departed from the shores of Lochleven, guarding in their midst their beautiful and happy sovereign. They skirted the little village of Kinross, whose inhabitants had doubtless been roused by the alarm from the castle, and rode rapidly away toward Seaton's stronghold, where there was a sufficient garrison to protect the Queen from a sudden attack.

They travelled all night, Lord Seaton riding on one side of the Queen and Douglas on the other, and toward dawn arrived at Niddrie Castle, which was not far from Linlithgow, the Queen's birthplace.

"Madam," said Lord Seaton, as he conducted Mary to the apartments which had awaited her coming for nine months, "you have need of repose after the excitement and strain of the past twelve hours, and I beg that you will rest quietly and be alarmed by nothing. Any noise which you may hear will be caused by the arrival of re-enforcements which we are hourly expecting. As for your enemies, your Grace has nothing to fear from them while under my roof."

The Queen again thanked her rescuers, gave Douglas her hand to kiss, pressed her lips to the boy's forehead, telling him he should in future be her favorite page, and then retired to her chamber, where Mary Seaton claimed the privilege of still performing the duties which had been hers during their eleven months' captivity.

Upon opening her eyes after a long and refreshing sleep, Mary Stuart thought she had been dreaming one of those blissful dreams which are so agonizing to a prisoner when he wakes to find his freedom was but a vision, that his dungeon door is still securely bolted, his window still barred. Hardly believing the evidence of her senses, she sprang out of bed and ran straight to the window; the court-yard below was filled with soldiers, and those armed men were all friends who had flocked to Niddrie on hearing of her escape, for she recognized the banners of Seaton, Herries, Hamilton, and Arbroath. As she stood gazing with moist eyes on the brave men who had come to fight, perhaps to die, for her, some one perceived, her and in an instant caps and banners were waving, and shouts of "Long live Mary of Scotland!" Long live our Queen!" greeted her ears.

Regardless of her negligé costume, beautiful and pure as her emotion, she bowed graciously and smiled upon the assembled troops, while tears of joy coursed down her cheeks.

When her excitement had somewhat abated, she recollected that she had no other costume than the livery in which she had escaped from Lochleven. She spoke of her dilemma to Mary Seaton, who replied by opening the wardrobe doors; it was filled with dresses which, like the livery, had been fitted on Mary Flemming, and contained all the accessories of a woman's toilet. The Queen was amazed; it seemed as if she had entered an enchanted castle where she had but to express a desire and it was gratified.

"Darling," she said, examining the costumes, which had been selected with exquisite taste and with a wonderful knowledge of what suited her beauty best, "I knew your father was a brave and loyal knight, but I did not think him a connoisseur in matters of dress; I shall name him director of the wardrobe."

"Ah, madam," replied Mary Seaton laughing, "my dear father could never fill that office. He has looked to the polishing of every cuirass, the sharp-

ening of every sword, unrolled every banner in the castle, and is ready to die in your Majesty's service; but it would never have occurred to him to offer your Grace anything but his sword, his house, and perhaps his cloak if you required it. It was Douglas who forestalled all your wants and thought of everything, even of Rosabell, who now awaits impatiently in the stable for the moment when your Majesty will mount her, and return in triumph to Edinburgh."

"How did he manage that?" asked the Queen in amazement; "I thought that the fair Alice, my brother's favorite sultana, had fallen heir to the mare."

"So she did, and, knowing the animal's value, mistress Alice kept her under lock and key and guarded by a small army of grooms. But Douglas can perform miracles, and the horse is here."

Mary Stuart's eyes filled with tears. "O loyal, tender heart," she murmured, "yours is a devotion which cannot be repaid; others will be content with offices, honors, riches, but you care for none of those, and that which would make you happy I can never give you."

"Come, come, madame," said her companion

cheerily, "do not worry about Douglas; God assumes the obligations of kings, and He will reward your knight. I must remind your Majesty," she continued smiling, "that dinner is served and awaits your appearance, and I hope you do not intend to affront my father, as you did Lord Douglas, by refusing to grace his banquet."

"It was fortunate I did," said Mary; "but a truce to gloomy thought—we will consider when we reign once more what we can do for Douglas."

Mary Seaton made haste to complete her Majesty's toilet, and escorted her to the great hall where those of the principal nobles of her party who had arrived at the rendezvous were awaiting her coming; her entrance was greeted with joyous acclamations, and she took her seat at the table amidst general enthusiasm, having Lord Seaton on her right hand, Douglas on her left, while Willie stood behind her chair to fill, for the first time, his office of page.

It was settled that on the following day the Queen and her adherents should travel to Hamilton where more troops awaited them, and at the appointed hour Mary appeared among her protectors, mounted on Rosabell and arrayed in a

bewitching Amazonian costume; shouts of joy and admiration rose on all sides; every one praised the Queen's beauty, grace, and spirit, and Mary Stuart was herself again as she felt her hold tighten upon the power of fascination which she had always exercised over all who came in contact with her. Everybody was in high spirits, and perhaps the happiest of all who were there assembled was little Douglas, who for the first time in his short life was treated with kindness and consideration, wore fine clothes, and rode a beautiful horse.

Two or three thousand men awaited Mary at Hamilton, where she arrived the same evening, and during the night their number was increased to six thousand. On the 2d of May, Mary Stuart was a prisoner, with no friend but a young boy inside her prison walls, and with no means of communicating with her partisans save the flickering, uncertain flame of a lamp; three days later she was not only free, but at the head of a powerful confederation which numbered among its leaders some of the noblest of Scotland's peers.

The most prudent of the Queen's advisers counselled her to advance at once to the impregnable fortress of Dumbarton, where, secure from attack,

she could await the arrival of all her supporters, many of whom resided in far distant counties. In accordance with that advice, the command of the troops who were to escort Mary to Dumbarton was entrusted to the Earl of Argyle, and on the 11th of May she set out with an army of ten thousand men.

Murray was at Glasgow when he learned of his sister's escape, and the town being strongly fortified he determined to hold it, and summoned the bravest and most devoted of his faction to join him. Kirkaldy, Morton, Lindsay, and the Douglases responded promptly, and he soon assembled around his standard six thousand of the flower of Scottish soldiery, while Lord Ruthven recruited followers in Berwick and Angus with which he was to join them.

Before daybreak on the 11th of May, Morton left Glasgow to occupy the village of Langside, through which the Queen had to pass on her way to Dumbarton; news of this move reached the Queen when the armies were about three miles apart, and remembering her experience at Carberry Hill, her first impulse was to avoid a combat, in which opinion she was supported by George

Douglas, who, clad in a plain suit of mail without device, still kept his place at her side.

"Avoid a battle!" indignantly exclaimed Lord Seaton, addressing Douglas as if the opinion emanated from him, as etiquette prevented his disputing the question with the Queen; "we might do that if we were one to ten, but as we have double their numbers we certainly shall not show the white feather. You give strange advice, my young friend," he continued scornfully, "and it seems to me that you forget you are a Douglas, and speak to a Seaton."

"My Lord Seaton," rejoined George calmly, "if only our lives were endangered, I venture to think you would find me as willing to fight as yourself, but we are now responsible for an existence more precious than all the Seatons and Douglases, and therefore I advise prudence."

"Let us fight! Let us fight!" clamored the chiefs.

"You hear, your Majesty?" said Seaton, addressing the Queen; "they are unanimous in their desire, and I believe to oppose them would be most unwise—we Scots have an old proverb that courage is the greatest prudence."

"But you heard it said, did you not, my lord," replied the Queen, "that the Regent's troops occupy a most advantageous position?"

"The greyhound pursues the hare over hills as well as plains," returned Seaton, "and however strong his position we will dislodge him."

"As you think best, my lords; it shall never be said that Mary Stuart obliged her friends to sheathe the swords they had drawn in her defence." Then, turning to Douglas she said, "George, select a body-guard of twenty men and take command of it; you must not leave my side."

Douglas bent his head gravely in sign of obedience, selected twenty of the flower of the army, placed the Queen and Mary Seaton in their midst, and took his place at their head. The march was then resumed, and in about two hours the vanguard came in sight of the enemy, whereupon they halted and awaited the main body of the army.

The Queen's forces were then abreast of the city of Glasgow, and the heights before them were already covered by a considerable force, over which, as above Mary's army, floated the royal banner of Scotland. Upon the declivity opposite lay the village of Langside surrounded by fields

and gardens; the road which led to it followed the natural lay of the land and was so narrow at one place that two men could barely walk abreast, while farther it plunged into a ravine, emerging from which it branched in opposite directions, one half leading to Langside, the other to Glasgow.

On viewing the lay of the land, the Earl of Argyle at once recognized the importance of occupying the village, and commanded Lord Seaton to take a strong detachment and make haste to invest it before the enemy, who had doubtless made the same discovery as the leader of the royal forces, for a considerable body of cavalry was in motion at that moment.

Lord Seaton immediately mustered his men, but as they were falling into ranks, Lord Arbroath drew his sword and, advancing to the Duke of Argyle, said angrily:

"My lord, you wrong me by sending Lord Seaton to seize this position; as commander of the vanguard that honor belongs to me, and I trust no one will dispute my right."

"The order to seize that post was given to me, and, by Heaven, I will execute it!" cried Seaton.

"Perhaps," retorted Arbroath, "but not in advance of me!"

"In advance of you, and all the Hamiltons!" exclaimed Seaton, and setting spurs to his horse he galloped down the narrow road shouting: "St. Bennet! Forward!"

"Follow me, my men," cried Arbroath, springing into his saddle and darting away in the same direction: "Forward, my men-at-arms! God and the Queen."

Both troops followed their leaders in disorderly fashion and came violently together in the defile leading to the ravine; there a struggle took place between those who should have fought side by side against a mutual enemy. At last they crowded through the pass and disappeared in the ravine, leaving behind them many a gallant fellow who would have served Mary well. Arbroath and Seaton had lost precious time in this senseless skirmish, and Morton's detachment was already in possession of the village, which it now became necessary for the Queen's men to capture, not to invest.

Argyle, realizing that the struggle of the day would concentrate about Langside, took command of the main body of the army and advanced to his

general's relief, ordering that a rear-guard of two thousand men should remain with the Queen, and await further orders before joining in the battle.

Whether the nobleman commanding this reserve force misunderstood the Duke's orders, or whether jealousy prompted him to display his valor under the Queen's eyes, none can tell, but scarcely had Argyle disappeared in the ravine, at the extremity of which Kirkaldie and Morton were engaged in a deadly combat with Arbroath and Seaton, than, heedless of Mary's protests, he too galloped off, leaving the Queen with no other guard than the little escort selected by Douglas.

"I am no soldier," said Mary sadly, "but it seems to me that this battle is both ill-advised and badly begun."

"Alas!" responded Douglas, sighing, "from the highest to the lowest we are all possessed by a spirit of folly, and those who should be cool and clear-headed are acting like fools and children."

"Victory! victory!" cried the Queen suddenly, clapping her hands, "the enemy are retreating, for I see the banners of Seaton and Arbroath waving among the first houses of the village." Her enthusiasm was quickly quenched as she espied a

corps of the enemy's cavalry advancing for a flank attack.

"That is nothing, madame, do not be alarmed," said Douglas reassuringly; "they are only cavalry and not greatly to be feared, and moreover Argyle will debouch in time to reinforce our men."

"Look, George!" cried little Douglas excitedly.

"At what?"

"Don't you see?" continued the child, pointing toward the enemy's corps, who were advancing at a gallop; "each horseman has an arquebusier on the crupper, so that the troop is twice as strong as it looks."

"Upon my soul, the boy is right!" cried Douglas, "he has sharp eyes. Some one must go at once to warn Argyle."

"Let me go!" cried the boy. "I saw them first, and I ought to carry the warning."

"Go then, my boy," answered Douglas, "and God be with you."

The lad flew off like an arrow, not hearing, or pretending not to hear, the Queen, who called him to come back. They watched him tear down the road and disappear in the hollow, just as Argyle emerged from the farther end to reinforce Seaton

and Arbroath. Meantime the enemy's detachment had dismounted the infantry, who had rapidly formed a scattering line along the side of the ravine, securing a position impracticable to cavalry.

"Willie will be too late," cried Douglas; "and even had he arrived in time the news would not have helped matters. Oh, fools, fools that we are! This is how we have lost all our battles."

"Is the day then lost?" asked Mary with colorless cheeks.

"No, madam, not yet, thank Heaven! but because of too great haste it has engaged badly."

"And Willie?" said Mary anxiously.

"He is serving his military apprenticeship, for, if I am not mistaken, he is at this moment in the very spot where the arquebusiers are firing so rapidly."

"Poor little fellow," said the Queen; "if any harm befalls him I shall never forgive myself."

"Alas, madam," responded Douglas sadly, "I am afraid his first battle will be his last, and now it is all over with him; for, unless my eyes deceive me, here comes his horse with an empty saddle."

"O my God! my God!" cried the Queen,

bursting into tears, "am I predestined to bring death to all who love me?"

George had not erred, for a moment later the boy's riderless horse trotted up to its comrades, and Mary saw, with despair, that the saddle was covered with blood.

"Madam," said Douglas, "we are badly placed here; let us gain the heights upon which Crockstone Castle stands, from thence we can command a view of the whole battlefield."

"No, no, I cannot go there!" almost shrieked the Queen; "it was there that I spent my honeymoon with Darnley; it would bring me ill-fortune."

"Very well then," said George, pointing to a hillock at a little distance, "we will take our stand up there, under that yew-tree; it is most important that we should see every move of the battle, for your Majesty's safety may depend upon an ill-advised manœuvre, or a moment wasted."

"Take my bridle rein then," said the Queen, "and lead me where you think best, for I can no longer see to guide my horse; every discharge of those terrible guns finds an echo in my aching heart."

Although the eminence to which Douglas con-

ducted the little band overlooked the whole field of battle, the constant discharge of artillery and the sharp fusillade produced so dense a cloud of smoke that it was impossible to distinguish aught save a shapeless, struggling mass amidst the homicidal vapor. At last, after an hour of suspense, flying forms could be seen emerging from the sea of smoke and seeking refuge in every direction; but at that distance it was impossible to distinguish who had won or lost the day, nor did the standards assist in the solution of the problem, for both of the contesting parties carried the arms of Scotland.

After a few moments of fearful anxiety they saw a body of Murray's cavalry rush down from the hills of Glasgow and charge upon the retreating forces; this movement dispelled their doubts—Mary Stuart's army was defeated.

While the little group stood dismayed and horror-stricken, a band of horsemen appeared from the ravine and advanced toward them.

"Fly, madam, fly!" cried Douglas; "for those horsemen are your enemies and will soon be followed by others. Cover as much distance as possible while I hold them in check, and you

men," he continued, turning to her escort, "sell your lives as dearly as possible, and die to the last man rather than let your Queen be taken prisoner."

"George! George!" cried the Queen, standing as if nailed to the spot, "do not leave me!"

But George had already ridden away at full speed, and being superbly mounted he traversed the intervening space with lightning-like rapidity and reached the narrow pass in advance of his enemies; there he stopped, put his lance in rest, and alone against five valiantly awaited the onset.

The Queen did not move, but sat as if petrified, her eyes fixed upon the unequal combat which was taking place within five hundred feet of her. Suddenly she noticed that one of George's opponents bore a bleeding heart upon his shield; it was the Douglas crest, and at sight of it she uttered a cry of horror and reeled in her saddle:

"Douglas against Douglas, brother against brother," she moaned; "oh, this is more than I can bear."

"Madam! madam!" cried one of her escort, "there is not a moment to lose; the young Lord of Douglas cannot long hold out against five, and we must fly for our lives." Suiting his action to

his words he seized the Queen's rein, another soldier gave Rosabell a sharp blow with his gauntleted hand, and they set off at a gallop just as George, having slain two of his enemies and wounded a third, fell to the earth pierced by a lance.

Mary uttered a low, piteous cry as she saw him fall; then, as if he alone had detained her in that place of danger and she took no interest in anything now that he was slain, she bravely composed herself, gathered up the reins and urged Rosabell to her utmost speed, and as, like herself, the escort were splendidly mounted, they were soon beyond pursuit.

She had a weary ride of sixty long Scottish miles, and finally took shelter at Dundrennen Abbey in Galloway, where, for a time at least, she knew she would be secure. The prior came deferentially to meet her at the convent gate, and received her with the utmost kindness.

"Father," said Mary, sadly as she alighted from her horse, "I bring misfortune and desolation in my train."

"They are welcome, my daughter," responded the prior gravely, "since they come accompanied by duty."

After a few words with the brave priest she went to her horse, whose drooping head and heaving sides bore witness to the loyal service she had rendered, and after kissing her between the eyes recommended her to the care of one of the escort; then, leaning on Mary Seaton, who had not left her for an instant, and Lord Herries, who had joined her on the road, she entered the convent.

Lord Herries did not attempt to disguise the gravity of her situation. The battle had resulted in total defeat, and all hope of her reascending the throne, for the moment if not forever, was swept away. There remained but one move for the Queen to make: to escape either to Spain, France, or England, and following Lord Herries' advice, which accorded with her own inclinations, Mary decided to take refuge in England, and at once wrote the following letter to Elizabeth:

"My dear Sister:—I have often prayed you to harbor my storm-tossed bark during the tempest, and if you will now promise it a safe haven I will cast anchor with you for the remainder of my days; otherwise the poor craft is in God's care, and she is well caulked and prepared to face all weather. I have always proceeded fairly with you, and do now,

so do not take my letter amiss. I do not mistrust you as this may incline you to believe, but have the utmost confidence in your friendship."

Elizabeth trembled with joy on the receipt of this letter. Her hatred of Mary Stuart had increased steadily during the eight years that she had reigned in Scotland; she had watched her as a tigress might a gazelle, and at last the graceful creature was about to seek a refuge in her lair. Elizabeth had never hoped for such good fortune, and she immediately despatched an order to the sheriff of Cumberland, instructing him to inform her royal cousin that she was ready to receive her; so, one morning, the inmates of the convent heard the blare of a trumpet on the shore; it announced the arrival of Queen Elizabeth's envoy on his mission to Queen Mary.

The prior, and many of the Queen's friends, urgently entreated her not to trust so powerful a rival as her English cousin, but the poor, dethroned Queen had perfect confidence in her "dear sister," and believed that she should enjoy at Elizabeth's court the position due her rank and misfortunes; she therefore persisted in her determination, despite all that was said to her. We of to-day have

seen another royal fugitive, attacked by the same mental vertigo, trust himself, as Mary Stuart did, to England's magnanimity; like her he was cruelly deceived, and found the scaffold of Fotheringay in the deadly climate of St. Helena.

When the Queen and her little suite reached the shore of the Frith of Solway they were met by the guardian of the English frontier, a gentleman by the name of Lowther, who received the Queen with the greatest deference, but informed her that he could allow but three of her women to accompany her. Mary Seaton immediately claimed the privilege of being one of them.

"My dearest girl," said the Queen tenderly, taking her hand, "you have already suffered too much for me; let some one else go."

But Mary Seaton, weeping, clung to her mistress' hand, sobbing that nothing in the world could make her forsake the Queen, and that if forced to remain behind she would kill herself.

Upon this all who had accompanied the Queen renewed their entreaties, imploring her to return to Dundrennen, and, if she dared not remain in Scotland, to seek refuge in some Catholic country. When she was half-way across the gang-plank

leading to the boat, the good prior, who had sheltered her with touching devotion when it was most dangerous to offer her hospitality, waded up to his knees in the sea that he might catch hold of her dress and beg her to reconsider her decision; at that moment Lowther advanced and addressed her:

"Madam," he said, "permit me to observe that the tide is now favorable, and that, if your Grace intends to sail, we should weigh anchor. I regret that I cannot extend a cordial welcome to England to all those who would gladly follow you thither; but our Queen gave positive orders that only a certain number were to accompany you."

"Your Majesty hears!" cried the prior, wringing his hands; "'positive orders!' In Heaven's name, madam, turn back while there is yet time; you are lost if you leave this shore. Help, gentlemen, help!" he shouted, turning toward Lord Herries and the other gentlemen of Mary's suite; "do not permit your Queen to abandon you; detain her by force if needs be, but, in God's name, prevent this journey!"

"What is the meaning of this violence, Sir Priest?" said Lowther haughtily. "I am here at the express request of your Queen; she is free to

return with you if she chooses, and there need be no question of force. Madam," he continued, turning to the Queen, "is it your desire to follow me to England, and do you undertake this journey of your own free will and without coercion? Answer me frankly, I beg of you, for my honor demands that the whole world shall know that you accompanied me willingly."

"I beg your pardon, sir," answered Mary, "in behalf of this worthy servant of God and his Queen, for any offence he has given you. I leave Scotland of my own free will, and I place myself in your hands, fully confident that I shall be at liberty either to remain in England or return to my relations in France. Give me your blessing, father," she said to the prior, "and may Heaven protect you."

"Alas! alas!" muttered the priest, "it is not we who have need of God's protection, but you, my poor child. I would that a poor priest's blessing could ward off the misfortunes which I see hanging over your royal head. Go, my daughter, go; you are in God's hands, and naught can befall you save that which His wisdom and mercy have ordained."

The Queen then gave her hand to the sheriff, who led her aboard the boat, followed only by Mary Seaton and two other women. The sails were at once set and the boat moved slowly off toward the coast of Cumberland. Mary's friends remained upon the beach watching and waving their handkerchiefs until the little craft, with the Queen standing in the stern, faded from sight, then, in tears and sadness, they dispersed in divers directions. Their grief was fully justified, for the good priest's presentiments were well founded and none of them ever looked upon Mary Stuart again.

Upon landing on English soil, Mary was met by messengers from Elizabeth, who were charged to express their mistress' profound regret at her inability either to admit Mary Stuart to her presence or accord her the affectionate welcome which her heart dictated. It was essential, they said, that before she appeared at court she should prove her innocence of all complicity in Darnley's death, as his family, being English subjects, were rightfully entitled to Queen Elizabeth's protection and had claimed justice at her hands.

Mary Stuart was so blind that she fell into the trap and at once offered to prove her innocence to

Elizabeth's entire satisfaction; but no sooner did the English Queen receive her letter, than she changed from arbiter to judge, appointed a commission to take the evidence on both sides, and summoned Murray to appear as his sister's accuser.

The Regent, who was fully cognizant of Elizabeth's secret intentions regarding her rival, did not hesitate a moment, but went at once to England, carrying the casket containing the three letters, the verses, and other documents which proved that Mary had not only been Bothwell's mistress during Darnley's lifetime, but had been a party to his assassination.

Lord Herries and the Bishop of Ross acted as the Queen's advocates; they maintained that the letters were forgeries, and demanded that they should be compared with specimens of Mary's writing by a chirographical expert, and that his testimony be accepted. To this Elizabeth objected, and to this day the authenticity of those damaging letters remains unverified. The investigation covered a period of five months, at the end of which time Elizabeth informed the opposing parties that, as the commission had failed to bring forth any convincing evidence either of the

justice of the complaint or the innocence of the accused, matters must remain *in statu quo* until either the plaintiff or defendant could adduce new evidence.

As a logical sequel to this extraordinary decision, Elizabeth should have sent the Regent back to Scotland, and permitted Mary Stuart to go where she pleased; but instead, she ordered her royal prisoner transferred from Bolton Priory to Carlisle, from which place, as if to crown her sorrow, the poor Queen could see the blue mountains of Scotland.

Among the judges appointed by Elizabeth to investigate Mary's conduct was Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk, an honorable but rather weak nobleman, who, partly because Mary was captivating and had convinced him of her innocence, partly because he was overpersuaded by artful plotters against Elizabeth, and partly because he was ambitious and desired to marry the Queen of Scots, resolved to release her from captivity.

His ideas were secretly encouraged by some of the English nobility, among whom were the Earls of Westmoreland and Northumberland, and even, it is said, by Elizabeth's favorite, the Earl of Lei-

cester. Their plot was not so quietly planned, however, but that it reached Elizabeth's ears, and she first warned the Duke of Norfolk to "be careful what sort of pillow he was going to lay his head on," and shortly afterward committed him to the Tower. Westmoreland and Northumberland, being warned in time, escaped across the frontier and took refuge in the marches of Scotland, which were peopled by Mary's partisans. The former afterward crossed to Flanders, where he died in exile; the latter fell into Murray's hands and was sent to Lochleven, where he was more carefully guarded than the royal prisoner had been.

The Duke of Norfolk was released after a short imprisonment, and it would have been well for him if he had kept away from the Tower for evermore, and from the snares which had taken him there; but even while in that dismal place he continued to correspond with Mary, and as soon as he was out of it began to plot again. Being discovered in correspondence with the pope, with a view to a rising in England, which should force Elizabeth to consent to his marriage with Queen Mary and to repeal the laws against the Catholics, he was recommitted to the Tower, and being found

guilty by the unanimous verdict of the lords who tried him, was sentenced to the block. Mary Stuart's star had not lost its fatal influence.

Meanwhile, the Regent had returned to Edinburgh, loaded with gifts and practically victorious in his suit, as Mary remained a prisoner. He immediately set to work to disperse the remainder of her partisans, and as soon as the doors of Lochleven had closed upon Northumberland he instituted proceedings, in the name of the child king, James VI., against all those who had upheld his mother's cause, and more particularly the Hamiltons, who were mortal enemies of the Douglases. Six of the most prominent members of that family were condemned to death, but succeeded in obtaining a commutation of the sentence to perpetual banishment through the intercession of John Knox, whose influence in Scotland was then so great that Murray dared not refuse him.

One of these amnestied men was a certain Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh, a type of the old *régime*, savage and vindictive as the nobles of James I.'s time. He was living in hiding in the Highlands, when he learned that Murray, by virtue of the decree of confiscation against the exiles,

had bestowed his property upon one of his minions, and had barbarously driven his bedridden wife out of her home, without so much as giving her time to dress, although the weather was intensely cold. The poor woman, deprived of shelter, food, or clothing, had gone mad, and wandered about in the neighborhood of her home for some days, an object of universal pity but of terror as well, for every one feared to compromise himself by doing aught to alleviate her misery. At last she died of starvation and exposure on the very threshold of the house from which she had so brutally been driven forth.

On learning of her terrible fate, Bothwellhaugh, despite his violent temper, displayed no anger, but only remarked quietly, with a smile of fearful meaning:

"I will avenge her."

The next day he disguised himself and left the Highlands, armed with an order from the Archbishop of St. Andrews (who had followed the Queen's fortunes to the last moment) that a house which that prelate owned in the village of Linlithgow should be placed at his disposal. This house, situated on the principal street of the vil-

lage, had a balcony overhanging the roadway, and at its back a walled garden with a door giving directly on to the open country.

Bothwellhaugh took possession at night, installed himself on the second floor, hung the walls with black so that his shadow might not be seen by passers-by, covered the floor with mattresses so that his footsteps should not be heard from the street, and tied a fleet horse, all saddled and bridled, in the garden. He then loosened the hinges of the garden-door, so that it would fall outward at a touch and enable him to pass through at a gallop, loaded an arquebus, and shut himself up in his room to await his victim's coming.

All these preparations were due, as the reader will have guessed, to the fact that Murray was to pass through Linlithgow the next day; but, secretly as Bothwellhaugh had worked, he was nearly foiled of his revenge, for the Regent's friends warned him that it was unsafe to pass through the town, which was peopled almost entirely by adherents of the Hamiltons, and advised him to make a detour to avoid it.

Murray, however, was a brave man and not in the habit of retreating before real danger; so he

simply scoffed at the fears of his friends and declined to alter his route. He passed through the village, not at a gallop, preceded by soldiers to clear the way, as his friends had counselled, but at a snail's pace, because of the crowd which thronged the street to see him pass and hampered his progress. When opposite the balcony the press became so great that he was obliged to halt for a moment, and that instant gave Bothwellhaugh time to accomplish his purpose. He steadied his arquebus on the balcony rail, and taking deliberate aim, fired. The gun was so heavily charged that the bullet passed through the Regent's chest and killed the horse of a gentleman who rode on his right, and Murray fell instantly, crying: "My God, I am killed!"

The Regent's suite had noticed from which house the shot was fired, and immediately forced the door and rushed to arrest the assassin; but they entered just in time to catch a glimpse of Bothwellhaugh galloping through the garden-gate. Returning to the street they hurriedly mounted their horses and raced off in his pursuit. Although well mounted and having a lead of some minutes, four of Bothwellhaugh's pursuers were so

well horsed that they began to gain upon him; seeing which, and that his whip and spurs were insufficient, he drew his dagger and used it to goad on his steed. Under this terrible stimulant the horse redoubled his efforts, and-clearing a ravine eighteen feet wide, put a barrier between his master and his pursuers which they dared not attempt to leap.

The murderer took refuge in France, where he was protected by the Guises, and as his bold act had given him a reputation for daring and courage, shortly before St. Bartholomew's overtures were made him to undertake the assassination of Admiral Coligny. But Bothwellhaugh indignantly refused, saying he was the avenger of his own wrongs but no assassin, and that those who had grievances against the admiral had only to follow his example.

Murray expired during the night following his assassination, leaving the Regency to the Earl of Lennox. On learning of his death, Elizabeth exclaimed that she had lost her best friend.

Despite the incessant and urgent demands of Charles IX. and Henri III., Mary Stuart remained a prisoner while these events were taking place in

Scotland. But, alarmed by the attempt which had been made in her behalf, Elizabeth ordered her removal to Sheffield Castle, the neighborhood of which was constantly patrolled by guards, who were frequently changed. Days, months, and years rolled away, and poor Mary, who had found it so hard to bear eleven months' imprisonment in Lochleven Castle, was for fifteen years dragged from prison to prison, despite her remonstrances and those of the French and Spanish ambassadors, and finally consigned to Tuxbury Castle and the care of Sir Amyas Paulet, her last jailer. The lodgings assigned her there consisted of two low, damp rooms, wherein the little strength remaining to her wasted away, and she contracted rheumatism, so that there were days when she could not move because of the excruciating pain in every limb; and at last she who was born in the purple, and had reigned over two kingdoms, was forced to humble herself and implore her jailer to give her a softer bed and warmer covering. This simple request was treated like an affair of state, and an entire month passed before it was granted.

Despite the unhealthiness of her place of confinement, poor food, and privations of every de-

scription, Mary's robust constitution still resisted; and, finally, it was intimated to Paulet that he would be rendering his Queen a great service by abridging the existence of one whom her Majesty had already condemned; but, churlish and hard as Sir Amyas was before Mary Stuart, he declared that while under his care she need fear neither poison nor poniard, for he would taste of everything served her, and no stranger should approach her save in his presence.

Elizabeth was therefore obliged to possess her soul in patience and to content herself with tormenting her whom she could not murder, with the hope that a fresh occasion would present itself for bringing her to trial. At last her wicked wish was granted, for a great plot was discovered, and it ended the career of the unhappy Queen of Scotland.

A seminary priest named Ballard and a soldier by the name of Savage, encouraged by certain French priests, imparted a design for murdering Elizabeth to one Anthony Babington, a young gentleman of fortune, scion of a Catholic family in Derbyshire, who had been for some time a secret agent of Mary's. Babington confided the

scheme to some other Catholic gentlemen, and they entered heartily into the plot. Two of their number, however, one of whom was a priest, were traitors, and kept Elizabeth's shrewdest minister, Sir Francis Walsingham, acquainted with every step of the project. Walsingham permitted them to go as far as he could without danger to his royal mistress, and then, having convicting evidence against the whole band, he arrested them on the eve of the day fixed for her assassination.

This imprudent and desperate undertaking furnished Elizabeth with the weapon she desired, for, according to English law, any attempt against the life of the sovereign was punishable with death; thus, at length, Queen Elizabeth held Mary Stuart's life in her hands. Orders were at once issued to Sir Amyas Paulet to seize the prisoner's papers and to transfer her to Fotheringay Castle in Northamptonshire; thereupon that gentleman, with a hypocritical pretence of sympathy, feigned to relax his usual severity and offered to allow the Queen to take the air on horseback, pretending that her health required it. The unhappy captive, who for three weary years had not seen the country save through prison bars, accepted the

offer with delight, and a little party, composed of the Queen, her attendants, jailer, and two guards, rode out from Tuxbury, Mary being mounted, for greater security, on a horse whose legs were hobbled. They reached Fotheringay in the afternoon, and the Queen found the apartments she was to occupy hung with black. Living, she had entered her tomb.

Meanwhile, her two secretaries, Curle and Nane, had been arrested and all her private papers forwarded to Elizabeth, who ordered the commissioners to reassemble and proceed immediately to try the royal prisoner. They reached Fotheringay on the 14th of October, 1586, and the following morning they convened in the castle hall and began their investigations.

Mary at first refused to appear before this tribunal, on the ground that it was incompetent to judge her, the commissioners not being her peers. She appealed to the ancient laws of England, which had never afforded her the least protection, but invariably left her at the mercy of those who were more powerful than she; but, finally, when she saw that the trial proceeded in her absence, and that calumnious statements of every descrip-

tion were accepted as evidence by the tribunal in the absence of counsel for her defence, she decided to appear in her own behalf.

We quote the report of the examinations to which she was subjected as transmitted to M. de Villeroy by M. de Bellièvre, envoy extraordinary from Henri III. to Elizabeth:

The Queen of Scotland, having seated herself at the end of a table in said hall, and said commissioners being seated around her, began as follows:

"I do not consider that any of you here assembled is my equal, competent to be my judge, or to question me with reference to any charge; therefore all that I do and say at this moment is of my own free will, and I call God to witness that I am innocent of the awful charges made against me, and that my conscience is pure. As princess royal and crowned Queen I am responsible to none save God, and to Him alone must I render an account of my actions; therefore I renew my protest, that my appearance before you may not be prejudicial either to me, the king, princes and potentates, my allies, nor my son; and I demand that my protest be recorded and a copy furnished me."

Thereupon the Chancellor, who was one of the commissioners, protested against the Queen's protest, and ordered that the commission under which they were proceeding, and which, he claimed, was founded upon the statutes and laws of the kingdom, should be read to her.

To this the Queen rejoined by a further protest, to the effect that the said laws and statutes were not applicable to her, because they were never intended to apply to persons of her rank.

The Chancellor responded that the commission was instructed to proceed against her, even though she refused to appear or plead, and declared that he should continue the proceedings in view of the fact that she was doubly answerable to the law, the conspiracy having been formed not only in her interest, but with her consent; to which her Majesty replied that such a thought had never entered her mind. Upon which letters purporting to have been written by her to Anthony Babington, and his answers, were read.

Mary Stuart then affirmed that she had never seen Babington, never had any conference with him nor received any communications from him; and that she defied any one in the world to prove

that she had ever done anything prejudicial or hostile to the Queen of England. Furthermore, she reminded her judges that, closely guarded as she had been since the day of her arrival in England, beyond reach of news from the outside world, separated and cut off from her kindred and friends, surrounded by foes, and deprived of all counsel, she could neither have participated in, nor consented to the intrigues of which she was accused. She said that many persons whom she did not know wrote to her, and that she received many letters which came from she knew not where.

Babington's confession was then read to her, but she replied that she knew nothing about the matter, and that if Babington and his confederates had really said such things they were cowards, forgers, and liars.

"Since you say I wrote to Babington," she exclaimed, "show me my writing and my signature, and not forgeries like these, which you have compiled at your leisure, and filled with falsehoods."

Thereupon they showed her the letter which they claimed Babington wrote to her. She glanced over it and said:

"I know nothing of this letter."

They then showed her her alleged reply, and again she said:

"I know nothing of this letter. If you can show me a letter in my own writing, with my signature, containing what you claim, I will plead guilty to everything, but up to the present moment you have produced no credible evidence—nothing but these forgeries, which you have invented and concocted to please yourselves."

With that she rose and continued, with tears streaming down her cheeks:

"If I ever consented to such an intrigue, having in view the death of my sister queen, I pray God to deal with me according to my iniquity. I confess that I have written to several people begging them to take counsel how they might deliver me from my wretched captivity, for I have languished in prison, a captive, ill-used princess, for nineteen years and seven months, but it has never occurred to me to ask, or even to wish, for the things of which you accuse me. I confess that I have used my influence for the deliverance of persecuted Catholics, and had I been, or was I now, able to save them by shedding my own blood, I should have, and would still do so." Then, turning

toward Walsingham, she continued: "From the moment I saw you here, my lord, I knew from whence this blow came; you have always been my bitter enemy, and my son's, and have prejudiced every one against me and incited your Queen to this step."

Thus directly accused, Walsingham rose:

"Madam," he replied, "I protest before God, who is my witness, that you are mistaken and that I have done nothing against you unworthy of a man of honor and integrity either in my private capacity or as a public servant."

That ended the first day's proceedings; on the following day the Queen was again obliged to appear before the commissioners, and being seated before the said table, with the said commissioners surrounding her, she began by saying, in a clear and steady voice:

"You are well aware, my lords and gentlemen, that I am a sovereign Queen, anointed and consecrated in the house of God, and that I neither can nor should, for any cause whatsoever, be summoned to your presence nor made to stand at your bar, to be judged by the laws which you put forward, for I am a free-born princess, and owe to no

prince more than he owes me, and I cannot make answer to the accusations brought against me in the name of my sister of England unless I am allowed the assistance of my counsel. You have the power to disregard my rights and to proceed as you choose, but I again protest against this mockery of justice; and I call God, the only just and true Judge, and the kings and princes, my allies and my peers, to witness my declaration."

This protest was also recorded in accordance with her demands.

She was then accused of having written several letters to the princes of Christendom, crying out against the Queen and kingdom of England.

"That," said Mary, "is another question and I do not deny it, and I would do as much again in the furtherance of my desire for freedom, and there is not a man or woman living who would leave a stone unturned toward securing the aid of their friends, and their release from a captivity as cruel as mine. You accuse me upon the evidence of certain letters of Babington's; well, I will not deny that he wrote to me and that I replied, and if you can find in my answers one single word regarding the Queen, my sister, I will admit the jus-

tice of this proceeding against me. I wrote that I would accept his offer to set me at liberty, if he could do it without compromising either of us—that was all. As for my poor secretaries, it was not they, but their torture which spoke; nor is great reliance to be placed in the confessions of Babington and his confederates, for now that they are dead you can put any words you like into their mouths—and those who choose can believe you."

The Queen then refused to answer further questions unless allowed to have counsel, and after renewing her protest withdrew to her apartments; but, as the Chancellor had threatened, the trial proceeded in her absence.

Meanwhile M. de Chateauneuf, the French ambassador at London, was too close to headquarters to be deceived as to the course affairs were taking, and as soon as a rumor reached him that Mary Stuart was to be brought to trial, he wrote to King Henri III. urging him to intervene in behalf of the prisoner. The King at once dispatched M. de Bellièvre as envoy extraordinary to Elizabeth, and at the same time, having learned that James VI., Mary's son, instead of interesting himself in his mother's fate, had replied to Cour-

celles, the French ambassador at his court, who had ventured to speak to him of her sad plight, "I can do nothing for her, she must reap what she has sown," he wrote the following letter, in the hope of determining the young king to second his efforts toward Mary's acquittal and release:

"November 21, 1856.

"COURCELLES:—I have received your letter of October 4, and have read the observations of the King of Scotland in response to the assurance you gave him of my affection for him, observations which indicate that he is disposed to reciprocate that feeling; but I wish your letter had informed me that he was better inclined toward the Queen, his mother, and that his heart prompted him to assist her in her present affliction. The fact that she has unjustly been imprisoned for over eighteen years ought to induce him to lend an ear to any plan proposed to secure her freedom—liberty is naturally desired by all men, and above all by those who are born of sovereign race, and destined to rule over other men. He should also consider that if my good sister, the Queen of England, hearkens to the counsels of those who desire that she should stain her hands with Queen Mary's blood, it will greatly and lastingly dishonor him, as the universal judgment of mankind will be that

he refused his mother the benefit of his good offices with the said Queen of England, a service which it was his duty to undertake, and which would, perhaps, suffice to move my sister of England, if he would employ them at once and with the earnestness which filial duty commands. Moreover, it is to be feared that, his mother dead, his turn will soon follow, and that they may think to rid themselves of him by violence, in order to insure the English succession to those who are in a position to claim it after Elizabeth's death; and not only might they thus act in order to frustrate his rightful claims to the throne of England, but to cast suspicion upon his right to his own crown. I do not know in what state my sister-in-law's affairs may be when this reaches you, but under any circumstances I desire that you should do your utmost, by urgent remonstrance and in every way which seems good to you, to arouse the King of Scotland to exert himself to defend and protect his mother; and that you should tell him from me that as it is something for which, should he do it, he will be commended by all other kings and sovereign princes, so must he remember that if he fail in his duty he will be severely blamed, and the result may be disastrous to his own interests. As regards my personal affairs, you will learn from this that the Queen, my mother, is soon to meet the King of Navarre and confer with him with a

view to compose the disorders of this realm; if his love for me is as great as mine for him, I hope that matters will soon be brought to a satisfactory conclusion, and that my subjects will have a respite from the grievous ills resulting from a civil war. I pray the Creator, my good Courcelles, to have you in His holy keeping.

"Done at St. Germain-en-Laye, November 21, 1586. (Signed) HENRI.

"(Countersigned) BRULART."

This letter determined James VI. to make an effort in his mother's behalf, and he sent Gray, Robert Melvil, and Sir William Keith to Queen Elizabeth; but, although Edinburgh was far nearer London than Paris, the French embassy arrived in advance of the Scotch King's envoys. The French embassy reached London on Monday, December 1, 1586, and M. de Bellièvre immediately dispatched one of his suite, one M. de Villiers, to the court, which was then at Richmond; Queen Mary's judgment had been secretly rendered a week previous and submitted to Parliament, who were debating it with closed doors.

The French envoy could not have sought an audience at a less auspicious moment, and to gain

time Elizabeth refused to receive M. de Villiers, sending word that the reason of her refusal would be made known on the following day; and the French embassy were amazed next day by hearing that a report was generally circulated in London that two of the gentlemen of M. de Bellièvre's suite had died of the pest at Calais, and that therefore the Queen, in spite of her desire to oblige Henri III., was unable to receive his messengers.

M. de Bellièvre was astounded when he heard this story; he declared that the Queen had been deceived by a false and malicious rumor, and insisted on being received; nevertheless, the audience was postponed from day to day for nearly a week, and it was not until he threatened to return to his King that Elizabeth, disquieted by Spain's attitude, and not anxious to embroil herself with France, sent word to M. de Bellièvre, on the morning of December 7, that she would receive him on the afternoon at Richmond.

At the hour set for their reception M. de Chateauneuf, ambassador to the English court, and M. de Bellièvre, envoy extraordinary, presented themselves at the palace and were conducted to the Queen's presence, and, after the customary

formalities and salutations, began to deliver the remonstrances with which they were charged. Elizabeth answered them in their own language, which she spoke fluently, but declined to give them any definite information as to her intentions regarding Queen Mary, promising, however, to do so within a few days.

M. de Chateauneuf and the envoy were obliged to content themselves with this, and returned to London; but while they awaited the promised message they learned through a secret channel that sentence of death had been pronounced upon Mary. This information determined them upon returning to Richmond and again remonstrating with the Queen, and after making two or three profitless journeys they were finally admitted to the royal presence on the 15th of December. Elizabeth did not deny that sentence had been pronounced, and it was very evident that she did not intend to exercise her right of pardon; so M. de Bellièvre concluded that his mission was hopeless, and demanded his passports, and the Queen promised that he should have them within two or three days.

On the Tuesday following, December 17th, Par-

liament was convoked at Westminster Palace and Mary Stuart's death-sentence was read, after which it was read with great pomp and solemnity on all the squares and public places of London, from whence the news was disseminated throughout the kingdom; and in token of public satisfaction citizens illuminated their houses and lighted bonfires, and all the bells were rung.

In the midst of this general rejoicing M. de Bellièvre determined to make one more effort, so that he should have nothing with which to reproach himself, and wrote the following letter to Queen Elizabeth:

"MADAME: We left your Majesty's presence yesterday, expecting, as you were graciously pleased to promise us, that we should shortly receive your reply to our royal master's prayer in behalf of the Queen of Scotland, his sister-in-law and ally; but we have this morning been advised that the said Queen's sentence has been publicly proclaimed throughout the city of London, although we based other hopes upon your clemency and your friendship for our Sovereign. Nevertheless, that we may do our whole duty, and fulfil the intentions of our King, we humbly supplicate your Majesty to exercise your sovereign right of pardon

and not refuse his Majesty's most urgent and affectionate prayers for the Queen of Scotland's life. The granting of this request will be received by our lord the King as the greatest favor your Majesty could bestow upon him; as, on the contrary, nothing could cause him greater displeasure or wound him more deeply than the proposed rigorous treatment of the said Queen. And, madame, as our master, the said King, when he accredited us to your Majesty in this matter, did not suppose it possible that such a *dénouement* could be reached so promptly, we humbly implore your Grace, before the irrevocable step is taken, to allow us sufficient time to inform him of the actual condition of the said Queen's affairs, in order that your highness may know, before coming to a final determination in the matter, what his Most Christian Majesty may be pleased to say to you by way of remonstrance concerning the most important affair which has been submitted to the judgment of men within our memory.

"Monsieur de Saint-Cyr, who will present this to your Majesty, will, we venture to hope, bring us a favorable response.

"(Signed) DE BELLIÈVRE,
"DE L'AUBESPINE CHATEAUNEUF.

"LONDON, December 16, 1586."

Monsieur de Saint-Cyr and several other members of the embassy carried this letter to Richmond, but Elizabeth sent word that she was indisposed and unable to receive them, and they were compelled to hand their letter to Walsingham, the Secretary of State, who promised them a prompt reply.

In the face of this promise two days passed in silence, but toward evening on the second two English gentlemen called at the embassy, and without exhibiting anything in writing to confirm their statements, verbally informed M. de Bellièvre that in accordance with the desire expressed in his letter, her Majesty had decided to accord Mary Stuart a reprieve of twelve days, during which time the King of France could be informed of her condemnation.

As this was Elizabeth's ultimatum, and it was useless to press the matter further, M. de Genlis was at once dispatched to France with instructions to supplement the long dispatches from M. de Chateauneuf and M. de Bellièvre by telling the King verbally all that he had seen or heard relative to Queen Mary's affairs during his stay in England.

Henri III. immediately replied with a letter containing fresh instructions to his ambassadors; but although M. de Genlis made the utmost haste, he did not reach London until the fourteenth day, forty-eight hours after the expiration of the reprieve. Nevertheless, as the sentence had not been executed, MM. de Chateauneuf and de Bellièvre hastened to Greenwich, where the Queen then was, and besought an audience for the purpose of transmitting their King's message. For four or five days Elizabeth steadily refused to receive them, but as they would not be rebuffed and returned again and again to the charge, they were finally granted an audience.

They were introduced with all the formalities of the etiquette in usage at that period, and found the Queen awaiting them in the audience-hall. The ambassadors approached and saluted her, and M. de Bellièvre at once began most respectfully, but firmly, to deliver his King Henri's message. Elizabeth listened impatiently, moving restlessly in her arm-chair, and at last, unable to control herself, she sprang to her feet, and with flaming cheeks and flashing eyes, demanded:

"M. de Bellièvre, were you really charged by

your King, my brother, to address me in such fashion?"

"Yes, madame," replied M. de Bellièvre, bowing; "I was expressly commanded to do so."

"Have you the order in writing—signed by his own hand?"

"Yes, madame," returned the envoy calmly; "the King, your brother, instructed me, in letters signed with his own hand, to address to your Majesty the remonstrance I have had the honor to address to you."

"I demand copies of such letters, attested with your own hand," cried Elizabeth, giving full sway to her wrath; "and remember that you will be held responsible for every word that you add or expunge."

"Madame," replied de Bellièvre, coolly, "it is not customary for the Kings of France, or their agents, to falsify letters or other documents. To-morrow morning you shall have the copies you so graciously request, and I will answer for their accuracy."

"Enough, sir, enough!" exclaimed the Queen; and signing to all present to leave the room, she remained nearly an hour closeted with the envoys.

No one knows what passed at that interview, save that Elizabeth promised to send an ambassador to the King of France, who should reach Paris as soon as, if not in advance of, M. de Bellièvre, and who should be the bearer of her final decision regarding the Queen of Scotland. She also gave the ambassadors to understand that any further efforts they might make to see her would be fruitless.

On January 13th the envoys received their passports, and were informed that a ship of war awaited them at Dover; but on the very day of their departure a strange thing happened.

A gentleman by the name of Stafford, brother to Elizabeth's ambassador to France, called upon M. de Trappes, an attaché of the French embassy in London, and said that he knew of a man in the debtors' prison who had something of the utmost importance to communicate to him, touching the affair of the Queen of Scotland and the service the French King desired to render her. Although M. de Trappes distrusted the man, he felt that, under existing circumstances, he had no right to be influenced by a mere suspicion, and he therefore accompanied Mr. Stafford to the debtors' prison.

On meeting the prisoner the man informed him that he was detained for a debt of twenty crowns only, and that his desire for freedom was so great that if M. de Chateauneuf would pay that sum he would engage to deliver the Queen of Scotland from her perilous position by stabbing Elizabeth. Seeing the snare which had been laid for the ambassador, M. de Trappes expressed unbounded astonishment at the proposal, and said he was positive that M. de Chateauneuf would be horrified at the idea of any plot which menaced either the Queen's life or the tranquillity of her kingdom; then, refusing to listen to anything further, he hurried to the embassy and informed M. de Chateauneuf of all that had taken place. The ambassador, fathoming the motive of this proposition, told Mr. Stafford that he thought it very strange that a gentleman like himself should suggest such a dastardly act to another gentleman, and ordered him to leave the embassy at once and never show his face there again. Stafford withdrew with the air of a man appalled at his own baseness and fearing for his life; and pretending to believe that he was a doomed man, he besought M. de Trappes to allow him to cross the Channel with him and the

French envoys. His request was referred to M. de Chateauneuf, who responded that he not only forbade his house to Mr. Stafford, but forbade him to hold any communication with any one connected with the legation, adding that if he were not restrained by his high regard for his fellow diplomat, the Earl of Stafford, he would instantly denounce his treason. Stafford was arrested that very day.

This adventure ended, M. de Trappes left London and hastened to join his companions, who had some hours the start of him; but he was arrested in the suburbs of Dover, taken back to London, and cast into prison. Upon being interrogated he frankly related all that had passed, giving M. de Chateauneuf as a witness of the truth of his statement. On the following day he was questioned a second time, and great was his amazement when, in answer to his request that his replies of the previous day should be read, they produced a falsified report, which compromised both M. de Chateauneuf and himself. Indignant at such villainy, he demanded that it should be destroyed, entered a formal protest against the injustice of the proceeding, refused to answer another question or

sign another statement, and was taken back to the Tower with ostentatious precautions, intended to give the impression that he was held on a serious charge.

The next day M. de Chateauneuf was summoned before the Queen and there confronted with Stafford, who impudently maintained that he had plotted with M. de Trappes and a certain prisoner for debt, to free Mary Stuart by ridding her of her powerful cousin and enemy, the Queen. M. de Chateauneuf denied Stafford's story and defended himself and the unlucky attaché warmly; but Elizabeth was desirous of believing in the conspiracy, and refused to credit the evidence brought forward to convince her, and she informed M. de Chateauneuf that his position as ambassador alone prevented his being arrested like his confederate, M. de Trappes. As she had promised, she dispatched an ambassador to Henri III., but instead of charging him to explain the judgment which had just been pronounced and the execution about to follow, he was instructed to accuse M. de Chateauneuf of complicity in a plot, the discovery of which had determined the Queen of Scotland's fate, experience having convinced Elizabeth that

so long as her cousin lived her own life was in peril.

Elizabeth caused the story of the fresh danger she had escaped to be circulated, not only in London but throughout England; and when the Scotch ambassador arrived and laid James VI.'s protest before her, she replied that their request for clemency was particularly ill-timed, as she had just acquired convincing proof of the dangers which surrounded her and which were due to Mary Stuart's influence. Robert Melvil essayed to combat this assertion, upon which Elizabeth lost her temper, and, cutting him short, said that it was owing to his bad advice that the King of Scotland had interested himself in his mother's behalf, and that if she had such an adviser she would have him beheaded.

Melvil replied that even at the risk of his life he would never refrain from giving his master good advice, and that he who would counsel a son to abandon his mother and leave her to die deserved to lose his head.

At that, Queen Elizabeth ordered him to withdraw, saying she would communicate her reply to his master's request shortly.

Several days passed without bringing any message; then Melvil, determined to force her hand, requested a farewell audience, which the Queen accorded. As in M. de Bellièvre's case, the interview consisted largely of complaints and recriminations; but, after much talk, Elizabeth finally asked the envoys what assurance of her own safety they could give her in case she consented to pardon the Queen of Scotland. Melvil replied that they were authorized to promise, in the name of their King and all his nobles, that Mary Stuart would renounce all claim to the throne of England in favor of her son, and that the King of France and all her relations among the princes and nobles would be her sureties.

To this Elizabeth, forgetting her usual caution, responded excitedly:

"Truly, that is a fine suggestion, Melvil! You propose that I shall arm my enemy with two claims, whereas he has now but one."

"Your Majesty then regards the King, my master, as your enemy," said Melvil, calmly. "He thinks himself more fortunate, madam, and believes himself your ally."

"No, no," said Elizabeth, coloring; "that was

a mere figure of speech. I meant nothing, and if you can find a way of contenting every one I am ready to prove my friendship for King James by clemency to his mother. So do you seek a means of adjustment, and I, too, will endeavor to find one."

With these words Elizabeth dismissed them, and they left her presence encouraged by the hope she held out to them. The same evening a gentleman of the court called upon the Honorable Mr. Gray, chief of the Scotch embassy, and during the course of the conversation remarked that it was very difficult to reconcile Queen Elizabeth's safety with the life of her prisoner; and, furthermore, that should she or her son ever sit upon the throne of England, there would be no security for the members of the tribunal who had voted for her death. Really, he said, there seemed but one way of adjusting the matter, and that was for the King of Scotland to renounce his own claim to the crown of England; otherwise, Elizabeth's regard for her own safety and peace of mind would prevent her sparing Queen Mary's life.

Looking the gentleman squarely in the face, Mr. Gray asked him if his sovereign had in-

structed him to make such a suggestion. The gentleman, however, disclaimed any authority in the matter, and said that the idea was entirely his own and advanced by way of advice only. Shortly afterward he took his leave, doubtless satisfied by Mr. Gray's manner that such an absurd proposition would not be entertained for a moment.

At the final audience accorded the Scotch envoys, Elizabeth informed them that after mature reflection she had discovered no means of assuring her own safety and sparing Mary Stuart's life, and was consequently unable to grant their King's request.

To this declaration Mr. Gray replied that his orders required him to formally protest, in King James' name, to the entire proceedings against his mother, insomuch as Queen Elizabeth had no jurisdiction over one who was a queen like herself, and her equal in rank and birth. He furthermore declared that upon learning of the failure of their mission, King James would convoke his Parliament, and would send messengers to all the princes of Christendom, to advise with them how he should avenge her whom he had failed to save.

Elizabeth immediately flew into a passion, and

told the envoys angrily that she knew they were not commissioned to deliver any such message to her; but upon their offering to confirm the declaration made in their King's name by a certified copy of their written instructions, she became somewhat calmer, and said haughtily that she would send an ambassador, who would arrange everything with her good friend and ally, the King of Scotland. To this Mr. Gray responded that his master would listen to no one until they had returned and reported the result of their mission; whereupon she requested them not to depart immediately, as she had not yet irrevocably decided the matter.

During the evening following this audience, Lord Hingley called upon Mr. Gray, and expressed great admiration for a pair of Italian pistols. After his departure Mr. Gray handed them to a cousin of his lordship's, with the request that he present them to Lord Hingley with his compliments. Delighted with the agreeable commission, the young man went at once to the royal palace, where his kinsman had apartments, to deliver the gift entrusted to his care; but he had hardly entered the palace when he was stopped

and searched, and the pistols being found upon him—although they were not loaded—he was at once arrested.

The next day it was currently reported that the Scotch King's ambassadors had also essayed to assassinate the Queen, and that pistols belonging to Mr. Gray himself had been found upon the would-be murderer.

Bad faith was so apparent in this affair that the Scotchmen could no longer close their eyes to it. They were finally convinced that no efforts of theirs could save poor Mary Stuart, and reluctantly leaving her to her fate, they departed for Edinburgh.

Despite her boldness, Elizabeth was fearful of the result of a public execution, and recurred to her original idea of ridding herself of Mary by means of poison or assassination; and scarcely had Mr. Gray and his companions left London than she sent Davison, her secretary, to Fotheringay to sound Sir Amyas Paulet with regard to his prisoner; but Sir Amyas vowed that no one should approach the hapless Queen save the executioner, and that even he must come armed with a proper warrant.

Davison reported his answer to Elizabeth, who tapped the floor impatiently with her foot as she listened, and when he had finished could not restrain her anger.

"God's death!" she cried, "what a scrupulous rascal he is! He prates continually of his devotion and fidelity, yet refuses to prove it!"

Elizabeth was therefore forced to come to some decision, and on February 1, 1587, Lord Burleigh having drawn up the warrant for the execution, she told Davison to bring it to her; and, forgetful of the fact that her own mother had died upon the scaffold, signed it without a tremor. Having ordered the great seal of England to be affixed, she said, with a laugh:

"Now go and tell Walsingham that Mary Stuart's fate is sealed; but be careful how you break the news, for he is in poor health and I fear the shock may kill him."

Her pleasantry was the more brutal as it was well known that Walsingham was the Queen of Scotland's most implacable enemy.

Next day Davison told her that the warrant was sealed, and she angrily asked why such haste was necessary. Next day but one she joked about it

and swore a little, but on the evening of the 14th she sent for Mr. Beale, Walsingham's brother-in-law, and gave him the warrant, with orders for the Sheriff of Northamptonshire, the earls of Kent and Shrewsbury, and other noblemen and gentry whose estates were in the neighborhood of Fotheringay, to be present at the execution. Beale took with him the executioner, whom Elizabeth had ordered dressed in black velvet for this great occasion; and two hours after receiving his orders he left London.

For two months Queen Mary had been aware that her death was approaching, for when Parliament confirmed the commissioners' findings she was informed of her impending fate by her confessor, who was permitted to see her for that one time. She profited by his visit to hand him three letters, which she wrote in his presence—one to Pope Sixtus V., one to Don Bernando Mendoza, and a third, which ran as follows, to the Duke de Guise:

"December 4, 1586.

"My Dearest Cousin: Being about to suffer death by virtue of an unjust judgment, and such a death as none of our race, thank God, has ever

suffered, I write to bid you, my dearest relation, farewell. Do not grieve over my fate, but rather thank God for it; for, imprisoned as I have been for so many years, I could render no service either to God or His Church, whereas I hope that my death will bear witness to my constancy in the faith and my willingness to suffer for the maintenance and restoration of the Catholic religion in this unhappy island. And, although the executioner has never before laid hands on one of our blood, be not shamed through my death; for the judgment of heretics, who have no jurisdiction over me, a free Queen, will be of profit in God's sight and to the children of His Church. Indeed, had I agreed to what they proposed, I should not have been brought to this pass. Many of our family have been persecuted by the fanatics; for example, your own good father, through whose intercession I hope to receive forgiveness from the Almighty Judge. I commend my poor, faithful servants to your care, and request you to discharge my debts and to provide for a yearly obit for the repose of my soul, not at your own expense, but by contributions, which you will solicit when you have learned my wishes from the poor and devoted servants who will witness the last act of my life's tragedy. May God prosper you and your family, and especially the head of our house, my good brother and cousin. May the blessing of God be

upon your children, whom I commend to His loving care as earnestly as I do my own son, unfilial and deluded as he is. You will receive certain of my rings, which will remind you to pray for the soul of your unfortunate cousin, who is without assistance or counsel, save that of Christ, who endows her with strength and courage to face the pack of ravening wolves who howl for her blood. Pray pay particular attention to that which will be told you by a person who will give you my ruby ring, for I promise that he will faithfully repeat my instructions, and especially those touching my servants, and the one of them. I recommend this person to you for his perfect honesty and sincerity, and I hope that you will find some suitable position for him. I selected him for this mission as he is the most impartial of all my adherents, and the one who will most accurately repeat my wishes. Do not let any one know, I beg, that he had a special mission, for the jealousy of others might injure him greatly. I have suffered much in the past two years, but have been unable to inform you of my condition. God be praised for all His works, and give you grace to persevere in the service of His Church, and may our family, both men and women, be ever ready to shed their blood to uphold the faith, leaving all worldly considerations aside. As for myself, I consider that my birth, both on my father's and my mother's side,

makes it incumbent upon me to offer my blood in that behalf, and I do not intend to fail in my duty. May Jesus who was crucified for me, and all the saints and martyrs, intercede to make my body a worthy sacrifice to God's glory. Thinking to humble me they cut down my dais, and afterward my jailer came and offered to write to his Queen, saying it was not done at his behest, but by the advice of some of the council. I showed him the Cross of Christ hanging over my lowered seat instead of our royal arms, and since then he has been less rough.

"Your loving friend and devoted cousin,

"MARY, Queen of Scotland and
Dowager of France."

From the day when she learned her sentence, Mary abandoned hope, for she knew that her life depended on Elizabeth's pardon; and, convinced that that would never be accorded her, she prepared to die. The cold and damp in the various prisons in which she had been confined had so affected her that at times her limbs were almost paralyzed, and she was troubled lest she might be in that state when the hour of her execution arrived, and so be unable to walk to the scaffold with a firm and resolute step as she intended to

do. She therefore sent for Bourgoin, her physician, and told him that she had a presentiment that the hour of her death was close at hand, and asked him what could be done to prevent a return of the rheumatism which paralyzed her movements. Bourgoin replied that it would be well for her to purge herself with a decoction of fresh herbs.

"Go, then," said the Queen, "and in my name ask Sir Amyas Paulet to permit you to go into the fields and gather them."

Sir Amyas was himself a great sufferer from sciatica and therefore able to appreciate the Queen's need; yet the request, simple as it was, met with many obstacles. He said he could do nothing in the matter without consulting his colleague Drury, but that Master Bourgoin could make a list of the herbs he required, and they would try to procure them for him.

Bourgoin replied that he was not sufficiently acquainted with English, and the village apothecaries not well enough versed in Latin, for him to risk the Queen's life by a chance error on either side. At last, after much hesitation, Paulet consented to Bourgoin's gathering the

simples, and the next day the Queen began the treatment.

The Queen's presentiments had not deceived her, for about two o'clock on the afternoon of February 17th Sir Amyas Paulet went to her apartments and announced that the Earls of Kent and Shrewsbury and Mr. Beale, a royal messenger, desired to speak with her. Mary responded that she was ill and in bed, but that if what they had to communicate was of serious consequence, and they would give her a little time, she would rise and receive them. They replied that the communication which they had to make admitted of no delay, and requested that she prepare to receive them. Whereupon Mary rose, put on her morning gown, and seated herself by a little table where she was accustomed to sit a great part of each day.

Sir Amyas Paulet then ushered in the two earls, accompanied by Mr. Beale; behind them, drawn by agonizing curiosity, were her favorite waiting women and confidential servants. They were Renée de Really, Giles Maubray, Jane Kennedy, Elspeth Curl, Mary Paget, Susan Kercady; Dominique Bourgoin, her physician; Pierre Gor-

jon, her apothecary; Jacques Gervais, her surgeon; Annibal Stewart, her valet; Didier Sifflatr, her butler; Jean Lauder, her pantler; and Martin Huet, her cook.

When Elizabeth's messengers of death entered the room they saluted Mary deferentially, and the Earl of Shrewsbury, standing with uncovered head, thus addressed her in English:

"Madam, the Queen of England, my august mistress, has sent me with the Earl of Kent and Mr. Beale, here present, to inform you that after an impartial and exhaustive investigation of the delict of which you have been accused and found guilty, and having delayed the execution of the sentence as long as possible, she can no longer resist the importunity of her subjects, who, in their affectionate fear for her safety, clamor more and more for its execution. To that end we have come, madam, bearers of a commission, and we humbly request you to listen to the reading thereof."

"Read, my lord, I am listening," responded Mary tranquilly.

Robert Beale then unrolled the commission, which was written on parchment and

sealed with the great seal of State, and read as follows:

"Elizabeth, by the grace of God, Queen of England and Ireland, to our trusty and well-beloved cousins, George, Earl of Shrewsbury; Henry, Earl of Kent; Henry, Earl of Derby; George, Earl of Cumberland; and Henry, Earl of Pembroke:—*

"*Greeting:* In view of the sentence pronounced by us and the members of our council, nobles, and judges, against the former Queen of Scotland, named Mary Stuart, daughter and heiress of James the Fifth, King of Scotland, and commonly called Queen of Scotland and Dowager of France; which sentence all the states of our kingdom in our last Parliament assembled not only ratified, but after mature deliberation declared to be just and reasonable; and likewise in view of the prayer of our subjects, entreating us to take measures for the publication thereof, and for its execution upon her person, inasmuch as they consider that she has merited her fate, and that her detention is and would be a source of daily peril, not to us alone but to their posterity and to the welfare of this kingdom, as well in the matter of the Gospel and

* The earls of Cumberland, Derby, and Pembroke disregarded Elizabeth's commands, and were not present either at the reading of the sentence or at the execution.

the true religion of Christ, and to the peace and tranquillity of this realm, and remonstrating against further delay on our part in granting a commission to execute said sentence:—In order amply to satisfy the prayers of our Parliament, by whom we are daily informed that all our loyal subjects, of the nobility as well as those of humbler state, out of their affectionate solicitude for our life and consequent dread of the destruction of the present happy state of the realm, do desire its execution; and being well persuaded of the weight of their continual representations, as tending toward the security of our person, we have finally consented and given order that justice be done upon the said Mary Stuart, Queen of Scotland. In consideration of our entire confidence in your fidelity and loyalty, and of your affection for our person and our common country, of which you are noble and worthy ornaments, we commend and enjoin you, upon sight hereof, to repair to Fotheringay Castle, where the said Queen of Scotland now is, in the keeping of our friend and trusty servant, Sir Amyas Paulet, and there to take custody of said Queen of Scotland, and see to it that by your command execution is done upon her in presence of yourselves and Sir Amyas Paulet, and of such other officials as you shall order to be present in witness thereof. And that said execution may be carried out in such

manner and form, at such time and place, and by such persons as you five, four, three, or two shall in your discretion deem fit, all laws, statutes, and ordinances to the contrary notwithstanding, we have caused the Great Seal of England to be affixed to these presents, which shall be full and sufficient warrant forever for each and all of you who shall be present, or shall by your command do aught pertaining to said sentence and execution.

"Done at our palace of Greenwich, the first day of February, in the twenty-ninth year of our reign."

Mary listened to the reading attentively and with great dignity and calmness; when it was finished she crossed herself and said:

"Welcome be all that comes in the name of God! I thank Thee, O Lord, that Thou deignest to terminate the ills with which for nineteen years Thou hast afflicted me."

"Madam," said the Earl of Kent, "I beg that you will bear us no malice because of your condemnation. It was necessary to insure the tranquillity of the State and the growth of the new religion."

"So," cried Mary joyfully, "I am to have the

honor of dying for the faith of my fathers; God deigns to accord me the glory of martyrdom. Father, I thank Thee," she continued, joining her hands, her face transfigured with religious fervor, "that Thou permittest me to make such an ending. It proves that Thou hast not forsaken me and wilt receive me amongst Thy servants in Heaven. From the manner in which I have been treated for nineteen years," she continued, addressing the earls, "I feared I was not so near a happy ending of my sad life. I could not believe that your Queen would dare to lift her hand against one who, by the grace of God, is like herself an anointed Queen, the daughter of a king, her nearest relative, like herself the granddaughter of Henry VII., and who has had the honor to be Queen of France, of which kingdom I am still Queen Dowager. My fear was augmented," she added, placing her hand on a copy of the New Testament, which lay on the little table at her side, "because I never persecuted her, nor consented to any attempt upon her life, nor have I ever desired her death—upon this holy book I swear that I speak the truth and nothing but the truth."

"Madam," rejoined the Earl of Kent, taking a step toward her and pointing toward the Testament, "that book upon which you swear is itself false, for it is the Papist version, and in consequence your oath is as unreliable as the book upon which it is taken."

"My lord," answered the Queen patiently, "what you say might be true in your case, but it is not in mine; for we do not hold the same opinions. I believe this book to be the only true and faithful version of the Saviour's life and teaching—a version made by a wise and godly man and approved by the Church."

"Your Grace's mind has been formed on the instruction received in your youth," the Earl replied, "and you have never inquired for yourself what was good or bad; and it is not astonishing that you should still be in error when none has ever shown you the truth. Now, as your Grace's hours are numbered, and there is no time to lose, we will, with your permission, send for the Dean of Peterborough, a most learned theologian, who will gladly instruct you to the salvation of your soul, which, to our great grief and that of our august Queen, you endanger by persisting in these

Papist follies and abominations which lead Catholics away from the word of God and knowledge of the truth."

"You err, my lord," answered the Queen gently, "if you think I grew thoughtlessly to womanhood in the faith of my fathers, and never seriously studied a question of such vast importance as religion. I grew up surrounded by learned men, who instructed me thoroughly upon such matters, and since I have been deprived of their words I have studied their works. I have never doubted the truth of the Church's teaching, and my faith will not falter now, in the hour of my death. The Earl of Shrewsbury can tell you that when I first came to England I passed one whole Lenten season listening to your learned theologians, without being in the least moved or impressed by their arguments. It would, therefore," she added, with a smile, "be altogether useless to send for the Dean of Peterborough, however learned he may be; but I *should* be grateful beyond measure if you would kindly send me my chaplain, who is kept imprisoned in this castle, and who would console and prepare me for death; or, if that is impossible, I would welcome any

other priest, it matters not whom—the curate of a poor village will be gladly received—for I am no harder to please than God, and do not ask that he have learning if only he have faith."

"I regret, madam," responded the Earl, "that I must refuse your request; but to grant it would be contrary to our religion and consciences, and we should lay ourselves open to grave reproach. It is for that reason that we offer you the services of the venerable Dean, with the certitude that your Grace will derive more comfort and satisfaction from him than from all the bishops, priests, and vicars of the Catholic Church."

"Thank you, my lord," responded the Queen quietly; "but I do not desire to see the Dean, and as I am innocent of the crime for which I am to die, I trust that God will accept my martyrdom in lieu of the Church's last sacraments. And now, permit me to recall to your mind, my lord, that I have but a few hours to live; that brief space I should prefer to spend in prayer and meditation, and not in fruitless discussion."

At that she rose, and with a courteous salute to the assembled gentlemen, indicated by a dignified gesture that she desired to be left alone and in

peace. As they were about to leave the room, she said:

"You have not told me, gentlemen, at what hour I am to die."

"At about eight o'clock to-morrow morning, madam," stammered the Earl of Shrewsbury.

"It is well," said Mary; "but did you bring me no reply from my sister Elizabeth, to a letter which I wrote her about a month ago?"

"What was the purport of the letter, madam?" asked the Earl of Kent.

"I wrote regarding my funeral and interment, my lord, and asked to be buried beside the late Queen, my mother, in the Cathedral at Rheims."

"That cannot be," he answered; "but the Queen, my august mistress, will provide suitably for your obsequies, and I trust you will not disquiet yourself about such details."

"I should like to know," continued the Queen steadily, "whether my servants will be permitted to return to their homes with the pittance I shall leave them. It will not be much, and will not requite them their long service and the imprisonment they have endured because of me."

"We are not authorized to promise that, mad-

am," the Earl answered; "but we think that everything will be done in accordance with your wishes. Is that all that your Grace desires to say to us?"

"Yes, my lord," said the Queen, bowing a second time, "and you may now withdraw."

"One moment, my lords; in Heaven's name, one moment!" cried the aged physician, leaving the ranks of the servants and falling on his knees before the earls.

"What do you wish?" demanded the Earl of Shrewsbury.

"To impress upon your lordships," replied the old man, weeping, "how little time you accord her Majesty for preparation for the great trial before her. Consider her birth and rank, my lords, and the position she held among the princes of Christendom, and judge if it is proper to treat her like an ordinary person under sentence of death. And, if you will not grant a little time for this noble lady's sake, do it in mercy to us, her unhappy servants, who, having had the honor to serve her so many years, cannot bear to part from her so suddenly and without preparation. Moreover, my lords, consider that a woman of her rank

and position requires time to settle her affairs; and, in God's name, what will become of us if our dear mistress has not time to regulate her accounts and arrange her papers? She has services to remunerate, pious works to provide for, and she will be compelled to neglect one or the other; we know that she will give all her time to our matters, and so neglect her own spiritual welfare. Grant her, therefore, a few days' grace, I implore you! Our mistress is too proud to ask such a favor for herself, but I humbly beseech it in the name of all her household, and implore you not to refuse a few poor servants a favor which your august Queen would certainly not refuse if they could lay the petition at her feet."

"Is it true, madam," Robert Beale asked, "that you have not made your will?"

"I have not done so, sir," answered the Queen.

"In that case, my lords," said Beale, "it would perhaps be well to grant her Grace a few days' respite."

"Impossible, sir," responded the Earl of Shrewsbury; "the time is set, and we have no right to change it by so much as a minute."

"Enough, Bourgoin, enough," said the Queen. "I command you to rise."

Bourgoin obeyed, and the Earl of Shrewsbury turned to Sir Amyas Paulet, who stood behind him, and said:

"Sir Amyas, we leave this lady in your keeping. You will look well to her and guard her safely until our return."

He then left the room, followed by the other gentlemen, and the Queen was left alone with her servants.

As the door closed behind Elizabeth's messengers, Mary turned to her women with a face as serene as if the news she had just received was of trifling importance.

"Well, Jane," she said, "did I not always tell you that they desired my death, and that I was too great an obstacle in the path of this new religion to be allowed to live? Come," she added, "let supper be served at once, so that I may have time to put my affairs in order."

Then, seeing that, instead of obeying, her servants stood weeping and lamenting, she said, smiling sadly, but with dry eyes: "This is not a time for tears; on the contrary, if you love me,

you should rejoice that God permits me to die for His cause, and relieves me from further suffering. I am thankful that He permits me to die for the glory of His Church, and I beg you all to accept my fate meekly and bravely. And now, while the men prepare supper, we women will pray."

Sobbing and weeping, the men left the room, and the Queen and her women fell on their knees. When they had repeated several prayers, Mary rose, and sending for what money she still possessed, she counted it and divided it in portions, which she placed in separate purses and marked them with the names of those for whom they were intended. As she completed this task supper was served, and she took her place at table with her women as was her custom. Bourgoin waited upon her as he had been in the habit of doing since her steward was sent away, and she ate neither more nor less than usual, speaking much of the Earl of Kent and his insistence about sending her a professor of the new religion instead of a priest.

"Happily," she said, smiling, "it requires a more able casuist than he to induce me to change my faith."

While the Queen smiled and chatted, Bourgoin

stood behind her chair, weeping silently. He could not dispel the thought that she who talked so serenely would, when that hour came round again, be but cold and senseless clay.

When the repast was ended the Queen summoned all her servants, and, pouring out a glass of wine, rose to her feet and drank their healths. She then requested them to drink to her salvation; a glass was handed to each one, and they all knelt (so says the chronicle from which we take these details) and solemnly drank the touching toast, mingling their tears with their wine, and begging her forgiveness for any faults of which they might have been guilty. Mary willingly forgave them and asked that they should do as much for her, and forget any impatience or injustice she might have shown, telling them to attribute her testy moods to her captivity. She then spoke to them at length upon their duty toward God and the Church, exhorting them to continue in the Catholic faith, and beseeching them, when she should be no more, to live at peace with one another and to forget the petty quarrels and discussions which had marred their harmony in the past.

This discourse finished, the Queen turned from

the table and prepared to descend to her wardrobe and see what clothing and jewelry she had to dispose of; but Bourgoin suggested that it would be better to have all her effects brought to her apartment, as it would be less fatiguing and, moreover, would prevent the English from spying. The last argument determined the Queen, and while the men were at supper she had her women bring all her clothing, took the inventory from the mistress of the wardrobe, and began to write on the margin the name of the person for whom each article was intended, the recipient immediately taking the garment designated and laying it aside. Such articles as were not suitable to be so disposed of she ordered sold, and commanded that the money thus secured should be used to defray her servants' travelling expenses to their homes, knowing the cost would be heavy and that none of them was prepared to bear it. When the memorandum was completed, she signed it and gave it to the mistress of the wardrobe in release of further responsibility.

She then went to her bedroom, whither her jewelry and most valuable personal property had been taken, looked everything over carefully, and dis-

tributed them as she had her dresses, so that none of those who served her were forgotten. To those whom she considered most trustworthy, she confided the jewels which were destined for her son, the King and Queen of France, the Queen Mother, and the Dukes of Guise and Lorraine.

She furthermore expressed the desire that each of her servants should retain the articles which had been their special care—that the linen should go to the maid who had looked after it, her embroidery to the one who had it in charge, her silver to her butler, etc. When her servants asked her to give them quit-claims, she answered that they would be useless, as what she had given them was her personal property, and that in a few hours there would be no one to lay claim to it; but when they reminded her that the King, her son, might put forward a claim, she admitted the wisdom of their request, and gave them what they asked.

This finished, and having no longer any hope that her confessor would be permitted to visit her, she wrote the following letter:

"DEAR AND REVEREND FATHER:—I have been harassed because of my religious beliefs and importuned to receive the ministrations of a heretic.

You will learn from Bourgoin that I was unmoved by anything they said, and that I made a firm declaration of the faith in which I propose to die. I requested that you be permitted to receive my confession and administer the sacrament, but that solace was cruelly refused me, as well as my requests that my body should be taken to France and that I be allowed to make my will without hindrance, so that I can write nothing save under their eyes and subject to their mistress' pleasure. Being thus prevented from seeing you, I here confess my sins in general, as I would have done in detail had the opportunity been given me, and I beseech you, in God's name, to watch and pray with me this night for the forgiveness of my sins, and to send me absolution, and your pardon for any wrong I may unwittingly have done you. I will strive to see you in their presence, as I am to be permitted to see my old steward, and if my endeavors are successful I will ask your blessing on my knees before them all. Send me the most fervent and comforting prayers you know of for to-night and to-morrow morning, for my time is limited and I have not the leisure to write. Do not be troubled, for I have recommended you to the care of my friends, as I have all my household, and a benefice will certainly be given you. Farewell, for I have no more time to write; send me by the hand of the bearer such prayers and ex-

hortations as are best suited to my state and eternal salvation. I send you my last little ring."

When she had finished this letter she set about making her will, and covered two large sheets of paper with the expression of her wishes regarding the distribution of her property; distributing the little that remained to her with scrupulous equity and rather according to the beneficiary's needs than his services. The executors she selected were her cousins, the Duke of Guise, the Archbishop of Glasgow, the Bishop of Ross, her first chaplain, and M. de Ruysseau, her chancellor; all four were eminently proper selections for the position, the first because of his rank and influence, the bishops because of their standing as pious, conscientious men, and the fourth because of his knowledge of her affairs. Her testament drawn, Mary wrote the following letter to the King of France:

"Honored Sir and Brother:—Having by the will of God, and probably because of my sins, placed myself in the power of my cousin, Queen Elizabeth, and having for twenty years suffered

grievously by her will, I am at last, by her, condemned to death. I asked for the papers which had been taken from me in order to make my last will, but this was denied me, as was permission to legally set forth my last wishes, and likewise my request that my body be taken to your kingdom, where I once had the honor to reign. My sentence was read to me this afternoon with as little ceremony as though I was a common criminal, and I am to be executed at eight o'clock to-morrow morning; I have not, therefore, the time to relate in detail all that has happened, but if you will deign to hear my physician, and others of my broken-hearted household, you will receive a truthful account of all that occurs and learn that, praise be to God, I die fearlessly, though I protest against my execution, being innocent of any crime, and moreover, not being an English subject. My steadfast adherence to the Catholic faith and my claims to the English throne are the veritable causes of my condemnation; they will not admit that I die for my religion, nevertheless they have taken my chaplain from me, and, although he is confined in this very castle, they will not permit him to hear my last confession or to administer extreme unction—but they have been most persistent in their endeavors to make me accept the ministrations of a schismatic, whom they brought here with that purpose in view. The bearer of

this letter and the rest of my servants, who are for the most part your subjects, will bear witness to the manner in which I performed this last duty; and it now only remains for me to beseech you as a most Christian King, my brother-in-law and long-time ally, to demonstrate the affection you have often protested for me by relieving my conscience of a burden of which I cannot free it without your aid,—that is to say, to reward my desolate servants, over and above their wages, and also to cause prayers to be offered for one who was called a most Christian Queen and who dies in the Catholic faith, sick, impoverished, and imprisoned. As regards my son, I beg your Majesty to show him such friendship as he may merit, for I cannot answer for his conduct; but I implore you to take an interest in my poor servants, whom I commend to you unreservedly and with all my heart. I have ventured to send you two rare stones which possess health-giving virtues, desiring that you may enjoy perfect health for many years to come; pray accept them in token of the deep affection of your dying sister-in-law. I recommend my servants to you in a memorandum, and request you, for the salvation of my soul, in whose behalf it will be expended, to order a part of your indebtedness to me to be paid, that I may leave enough to found an obit and to bestow the necessary alms. I conjure you, for the honor of Christ, whose mercy I will

implore for you in my dying hour, to fulfil these my last wishes.

"Your affectionate sister,

"MARY R.

"Wednesday, two hours after midnight."

The Queen had copies made of all these documents, including her will, so that if the originals fell into the hands of the English, the others might reach their destinations. Bourgoin suggested that it was inadvisable to hasten to seal them, as later she might think of something she would desire to add; but the Queen declined to follow his advice, saying she was sure she had thought of everything, and that, even if something were omitted, she had no further time for the affairs of earth, but must pray and make ready to meet her Maker. She then signed and sealed every document and placed them in the drawer of a wardrobe, the key of which she gave to Bourgoin; a foot-bath was then brought her, and she remained in it for about ten minutes and then went to bed, but not to sleep, for her attendants observed that her lips moved constantly as if in prayer.

Toward four in the morning the Queen, who had long been in habit of having the life of some saint

read to her at the close of her evening devotion, requested Jane Kennedy to read the story of the repentant thief who was crucified with Christ, saying, with great humility, that although he was a great sinner he was less culpable than she, and that she would pray him, in memory of Christ's passion, to intercede for her in the hour of her death.

When the reading was at an end she ordered all her handkerchiefs brought to her, and selected the handsomest, which was of fine batiste, embroidered with gold thread, for a bandage for her eyes.

At dawn she rose and began to dress; but before she had completed her toilet Bourgoin came in and begged that she would summon all her household and read her will to them, because he feared that there might be some dissatisfaction after her death, and that those who had not been immediately about her when it was made might accuse her personal attendants of having influenced her to increase their portions at the expense of their absent fellows.

Thinking this a wise suggestion, the Queen sent for all her people, and after telling them that her will had been made freely, and begging that each

person there present would do all in his power to insure the fulfilment of her wishes, without omission or change, she read the document to them in a clear voice; then, having received their promise to abide by its conditions, she confided the instrument to Bourgoin, charging him to place it in the hands of M. de Guise, her principal executor, together with her letters and other important papers. She then asked for the casket wherein she had placed the purses of which we spoke before, opened them one after another, and on seeing by the slip she had placed in each for whom it was intended, gave it to that person with her own hand, none of the recipients knowing what his purse contained: the gifts varied from twenty to three hundred crowns, none receiving less than the smaller nor more than the larger sum. To these she added seven hundred pounds to be given to the poor, two hundred to those in England, and five hundred to those in France, and to each man in her service she gave two rose nobles to be distributed in alms at his discretion; lastly, she gave a hundred and fifty crowns to Bourgoin, to be divided among them at the moment of their separation. All this the Queen accomplished without

any display of emotion, and bade them good-by serenely and calmly with words of cheer, rather as if preparing for a journey, or a change of abode, than taking final leave of those who loved her dearly and had served her faithfully.

When her toilet was completed she went from her bedroom to the antechamber, where there was an altar at which, before she was deprived of his services, her chaplain was accustomed to celebrate mass; she knelt upon the steps, her servants kneeling around her, and began to recite the prayers of the communion service, When she had finished she drew from her pocket a little gold box containing a wafer consecrated by Pope Pius V., which she had always carefully preserved for the time of her death, and, handing it to Bourgoin, bade him perform the office of the priest who was denied her, as he was the oldest of her servitors, and age was a venerable and holy thing; thus, despite the pains taken to deprive her of that consolation, Mary Stuart received the blessed sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Upon the conclusion of this solemn ceremony, Bourgoin informed the Queen that in making her will she had forgotten to mention her chaplain,

Mlle. Beauregard, and Mlle. de Montbrun. Greatly surprised at this omission, which was altogether unintentional, Mary opened the will and rapidly expressed her wishes regarding them in a codicil; she then knelt again and resumed her prayers, but was shortly obliged to rise, as the sciatica from which she suffered rendered the position too painful. Bourgoin brought some bread and wine and she ate and drank, and when she had finished gave her hand to the old man, and thanked him sweetly for having waited upon her at her last meal; then, having regained a little strength, she once more knelt to pray.

She had been but a few moments on her knees when some one knocked at the door; the Queen realized what it meant, but as she had not finished her prayers she requested those who had come for her to wait a few moments, promising to be ready in a very short time.

The Earls of Kent and Shrewsbury, recalling her resistance when she was required to go before the commissioners, ordered a number of guards up to the anteroom where they were waiting, so that they might be prepared to take her to the block by force in case she refused to accompany them

quietly, or her servants made any attempt to defend her. In accordance with the Queen's request they waited some minutes; then, as eight o'clock had struck, they again knocked; to their surprise the door was immediately opened, and they found the Queen still on her knees.

Sir Thomas Andrews, who was then Sheriff of Northamptonshire, entered the room alone bearing a white staff in his hand, and as Mary and her household remained absorbed in prayer, he slowly crossed the apartment and halted behind the Queen. He stood there for an instant; then, as she did not appear to see him, he touched her shoulder lightly with his staff, saying:

"Madam, I am sent to fetch you."

The Queen immediately rose, leaving her prayer unfinished. "Let us go," she said, and made ready to follow him; whereupon Bourgoin took down the ebony cross with a Christ in ivory upon it, which hung above the altar, and offered it to her, saying:

"Would your Majesty not like to carry this little crucifix?"

"Thanks for the reminder," replied the Queen, "I intended to take it, but had forgotten."

She handed the crucifix to Annibal Stewart, her valet, to be given to her when she should ask for it, and walked toward the door, leaning heavily upon Bourgoin, because of the great pain in her limbs; but on reaching the door the old physician suddenly withdrew his arm.

"Your Majesty knows," he said, with tears streaming down his cheeks, "that we all love you and would gladly obey you, even though you commanded us to lay down our lives for you,—but I, for one, have not the courage to support you further; nor is it seemly that we, who would shed our heart's blood for you, should seem to betray you by delivering you thus into the hands of your enemies."

"You are right, Bourgoin," the Queen answered; "and, moreover, my death would be a sad spectacle for you, and one which I ought not to inflict upon your years and your affection. Sir Sheriff," she continued, "I pray you summon one to support me, for you see that I cannot walk unaided."

Sir Thomas respectfully inclined his head and signed to two of the soldiers whom he had summoned to assist him in case the Queen offered any resistance, to approach and support her, which

they instantly did, and leaning on them Mary continued on her way surrounded by her weeping servants; but at the second door guards barred her people's passage, saying that they could accompany her no further. They cried out with one voice against such an order, saying that they had been for nineteen years in the Queen's service, had followed her from prison to prison, and that it was wicked to deprive their mistress of their services in her last moments, that such an order had doubtless been issued because some abominable torture was to be inflicted on her which it was not prudent to allow them to witness.

Bourgoin, seeing that neither threats nor prayers were of the slightest use, demanded to speak with the earls, but no attention was paid to his request, and when the servants essayed to force a passage the guards beat them back with the butts of their arquebuses, seeing which, the Queen strove to interfere.

"My Lord," she said, addressing the Sheriff, "it is cruel of you to prevent my servants following me, and, like them, I begin to believe that, aside from beheading me, you have some evil design upon me."

"Madam," he replied, "four of your servants have been designated to attend you, and when you have descended they will be sent for and will join you."

"What!" exclaimed the Queen, "cannot even those four accompany me now?"

"The earls' orders were that they should be brought down after you, madam," replied the Sheriff, "and to my great regret I cannot depart from them."

The Queen sighed heavily, but offered no further objections, and taking the crucifix from Stewart, and her prayer-book and handkerchief from one of her women, she turned and said:

"My friends, we are called upon to bear a new and unlooked-for grief and humiliation; let us bear it like Christians and offer this fresh sacrifice to Almighty God."

The heartbroken servants made no further effort to control themselves, but gave full sway to their grief; crying and sobbing they fell on their knees around the Queen, kissing her hands, her dress, her feet, and addressing her by every endearing title, besought her to pardon their faults and to in-

tercede for them when she should be a saint in Heaven.

Even the Sheriff and guards were touched by the scene, but at last, feeling it was unnerving every one, Sir Thomas waved his hand, whereupon the guards thrust them all, men and women alike, back into the Queen's apartments and closed the door upon them, but even through the barrier Mary could hear the sound of their grief, which seemed determined to accompany her to the scaffold, despite the guards.

At the head of the stairs the Queen found her steward, Andrew Melvill, who had been separated from her for a long time, and who had finally obtained permission to see her once again. On perceiving him the Queen quickened her pace, and reaching his side, fell on her knees before the old man and besought his blessing, which he gave her solemnly through his fast-flowing tears.

"Melvill," she said, still kneeling, "you have been my faithful friend and servant—be the same to my son; go to him when I am no more and relate the details of my death; tell him that I wish him every earthly blessing, and pray God to let the light of His countenance shine upon him."

"Your Majesty," replied Melvill brokenly, "that is surely the saddest message with which a man could be entrusted, but I swear to deliver it faithfully."

"Ah, Melvill," said the Queen, as he assisted her to rise, "you could carry no better news to any one who loved me than that I am at last delivered from life's ills. Tell my son that I die innocent of any crime and firm in the Catholic faith, and that I forgive those who are responsible for my death. Say to him that I have always wished to see Scotland and England united, and that I have done nothing which could injure his realm, or prejudice his standing as a sovereign prince; and now, my good friend, farewell until we meet in Heaven."

Leaning on the old man, whose face was wet with tears, she descended the stairs and was met at the foot by the two earls, Sir Henry Talbot, Sir Amyas Paulet, Mr. Beale, and a number of the gentlemen of the neighboring country; the Queen advanced toward them with quiet dignity, and, addressing the earls, complained of the separation from her servants and requested that they be permitted to join her. After a brief conference, the

Earl of Kent asked her to name six of her household whom she would like to have with her, saying that number might accompany her.

The Queen selected Bourgoin, Gorjon, Gervais, and Didier among the men, and Jane Kennedy and Elspeth Curle among the women, they being her favorites, although the latter was the sister of the secretary who had betrayed her. But here a new difficulty arose, the earls protesting that their permission did not extend to women, as they were unaccustomed to such spectacles and likely to create a disturbance.

"I will answer for my women's self-control," said the Queen, "poor souls, they only hope to perform some last service for me, and to sustain me by their presence, and, for the honor of your mistress, who is both virgin and Queen, and therefore keenly alive to a woman's sensibility, I hope your orders are not so strict that you cannot grant my only request, which is to have a woman near me in my last moments. Moreover," she added mournfully, "I think something might be conceded to my rank, for, despite my forlorn and helpless position, I am your sovereign's own cousin, Dowager of France, and anointed Queen of Scotland."

The nobles again consulted together and finally granted her request, and sent two soldiers to conduct her people to the hall.

The Queen then went toward the place of execution, preceded by the Sheriff and supported by two of Sir Amyas Paulet's squires, while Andrew Melvill carried her train. She had made as elaborate a toilet as her circumstances permitted, and wore a lace-trimmed head-dress of white muslin with a veil thrown back over her shoulders and falling almost to the floor. Her gown was of black brocaded satin with a long train and flowing sleeves, bordered with sable and fastened with large pearl and jet buttons; it opened over a quilted petticoat of black satin, above which she wore a low bodice of crimson satin laced behind and trimmed with velvet of the same color. Around her neck was a string of beads carved from scented wood, to which a golden crucifix was attached, and two rosaries hung from her girdle.

A low scaffold, some two feet from the floor and twelve feet square, surrounded by a railing and covered with black cloth, had been erected in the great hall; upon it was a stool, a cushion for kneeling, and the block, all draped in black like

the platform. As the Queen stepped upon the fatal planks, the executioner advanced and knelt upon one knee to ask her forgiveness for the deed he was about to do; he essayed to hide the axe which he carried by holding it behind him, but the Queen saw it and exclaimed:

"Ah, I would far rather be beheaded with a sword as is done in France!"

"It is not my fault, madam," replied the man, "that this last wish cannot be gratified, for I was not instructed to bring a sword, and finding nothing here but this axe, I must perforce use it, but I hope that will not prevent your forgiving me."

"I forgive you freely," Mary answered, extending her hand for him to kiss.

Having touched his lips to the Queen's hand, the man rose and brought forward the stool, upon which Mary seated herself. The Earls of Kent and Shrewsbury then took their places on her left, the Sheriff and his men on her right, and Sir Amyas Paulet behind her. Mr. Beale then advanced and began to read the sentence for the second time. While he was reading the opening words her servants entered the hall and were conducted to a place behind the scaffold; the men mounted on a

bench which stood against the wall and the women knelt before it; at the same moment the Queen's little spaniel, of whom she was very fond, slipped into the hall noiselessly, as if fearing he would be driven out, crept to his mistress' side and lay down.

The Queen listened listlessly to the reading of her sentence, as if it did not concern her, and her expression throughout was as calm as if it was a pardon and not a death-warrant; when Beale had finished and cried, "God save her Majesty," without evoking any response, Mary rose, crossed herself, and without betraying any agitation, but with a serene and beautiful expression, began to speak:

"My lords," she said, "I was born a Queen, a sovereign princess not subject to the laws, nearly related to your Queen and her lawful successor; I am not an English subject, nor justly amenable to the laws of this country wherein I have so long been imprisoned and endured great suffering and humiliation, and wherein, to crown all, I am about to lose my life. I call all here present to witness that I die in the Catholic faith, thankful that God has permitted me to suffer for His holy Church, and protesting that I never conspired against the Queen of England nor desired her death, but that,

on the contrary, I have repeatedly offered her good and reasonable conditions for the settlement of the troubles in her kingdom and my deliverance from captivity; this, my lords, you know to be true, and also that she has never honored me with a reply. My enemies have at last attained their object and accomplished my death; I forgive them as I do all those who have injured me. After my death my persecutors, who are the contrivers and perpetrators of the plots of which I am falsely accused, will be known—but I die without accusing any one, assured that God will avenge me."

The Queen was here interrupted by the Dean of Peterborough, who, perhaps fearing that such words from so lovely and exalted a woman would excite her auditors' sympathy, or because so many words caused too great delay, stepped to the platform and, leaning upon the barrier in front of Mary, said:

"Madam, my august mistress bade me come to you——"

"Sir Dean," interrupted the Queen, in a firm tone, "I have no need of your services; I do not wish to hear you, and I beg that you will desist."

"Madam," persisted the Dean, "I implore you

to reflect that you have but a few moments more to live, a brief space in which you may yet abjure your false doctrines. I beseech you to repudiate Catholic fallacies and rest your faith on Jesus Christ alone, that through Him you may be saved."

"Nothing that you can say will induce me to forsake my religion," responded the Queen firmly, "and I therefore beg that you will be silent and let me die in peace."

Perceiving that he was determined to continue his exhortations, she turned her back on him and seated herself upon the stool; but the Dean immediately made the circuit of the scaffold and faced her on the other side, thereupon Mary turned a second time, and seeing that nothing could shake her determination the Earl of Shrewsbury said:

"Madam, we are deeply grieved by your persistence in the follies and errors of papacy, and, with your permission, we will pray for you."

"I shall be grateful for your prayers, my lord," the Queen replied, "for the intention is kindly; but I cannot join in them, for we are not of the same faith."

Thereupon the Dean knelt upon the scaffold

steps, and while the Queen upon her stool was praying in an undertone he prayed in a loud voice, all present, save Mary and her servants, repeating the words after him. In the midst of his prayer the Queen knelt, and raising the crucifix before her, began to repeat the Latin prayers for the dying in a clear voice; after a moment the Dean's voice ceased and she continued to pray, but in English, so that all might understand her, for the afflicted Church of Christ, for an end to the persecution of Catholics, and for the peaceful and prosperous reign of her son, fervently declaring that she hoped to be saved through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, for the edification of whose Church her blood was about to be shed.

At these words the Earl of Kent could contain himself no longer.

"Zounds, madam!" he exclaimed, regardless of the solemnity of the moment, "take Jesus Christ into your heart, and cast out such papist rubbish!"

Mary, however, continued to pray and to implore the intercession of the saints, closing her petition with these words:

"Blessed Lord and Saviour, pardon my offences

and receive me in the arms which were outstretched for me upon the cross."

As she rose from her knees the Earl of Kent asked if she was not ready to make a confession.

"No," she replied firmly, "I am guiltless of the crimes attributed to me, and have, therefore, nothing to confess to man."

"In that case, madam," said the earl, "all the formalities are fulfilled and you must now prepare for the end."

The Queen arose calmly, and as the executioner approached to uncover her head and neck she said quietly:

"Let me do it, my friend; I know better than you how it should be done, and I am not accustomed to being undressed before so much company nor by such an attendant."

She then called her women and began to take the pins from her head-dress, and, as they could not restrain their tears, she said to them in French:

"Do not break down, for I promised that you would control yourselves."

She then began to remove her clothing, assisting her women as she was accustomed to do when

retiring for the night; taking the chain from her neck she handed it to Jane Kennedy, saying to the executioner:

"My friend, I know all that I now wear is rightfully yours, but for this symbol you have no use and I hope you will permit me to give it to this young lady, who will pay you double its value in money."

But the executioner hardly let her finish speaking ere he snatched it from her hand. "It is my perquisite," he exclaimed roughly.

The Queen manifested no emotion at his brutality, and continued to remove her outer garments until she stood in her bodice and petticoat. She then sat down on the stool and Jane Kennedy took from her pocket the handkerchief she selected the night before and fastened it over her eyes, a proceeding which greatly astonished the witnesses, as it was not customary in England.

Supposing that she was to be beheaded by the French method, that is, as she sat upon the stool, Mary drew herself up and stiffened her neck for the blow, but the executioner, not understanding her intention, stood awkwardly with the uplifted axe in his hand; at last his assistant laid his hand

upon the Queen's head and pushed her forward until she fell upon her knees. Then, comprehending what was wanted of her, the Queen groped for the block, still clasping her prayer-book and crucifix, and finding it, laid her neck upon it, placing her joined hands under her chin, as if to pray until the last moment, but fearing they might be cut off with her head, the assistant drew them away, and as Mary said in Latin, "Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit," the executioner raised his axe, which was of the kind used to cut wood, and struck the first blow.

Whether from nervousness or awkwardness, he struck too high and only fractured the skull, causing the book and crucifix to fall from the sufferer's hands but not detaching the head; the Queen, however, was stunned by the violence of the blow and made no movement, so that he had leisure to prepare for the second stroke, but even then the head did not fall, and a third was necessary to sever the shred of flesh which still held it to the shoulders; at last it fell, and the executioner held it up to the gaze of the assemblage, crying:

"God save Queen Elizabeth!"

"May all her Majesty's foes perish thus!" rejoined the Dean of Peterborough.

"Amen," said the Earl of Kent; but he was the only one; every other voice was choked by tears and sobs.

At this moment the wig which the Queen had worn became unfastened and the real hair, beneath the false which she had worn so long, was seen to be as gray as a woman of seventy, although she was only in her forty-sixth year. Her face had changed so in her agony that it was unrecognizable, and the sight of it evoked exclamations of horror, for the eyes stared awfully and the lips moved as if she still prayed; this appalling spectacle endured for some moments, while the beholders remained spellbound with horror.*

* There is a post-mortem portrait of Mary Stuart at Abbotsford; doubts have been cast on its authenticity, as it represents a beautiful woman with luxuriant hair, whereas historians assert that the Queen had aged terribly during her long imprisonment, and that her hair was quite white. It is claimed, moreover, that no one would have been permitted to paint her portrait, and that there is no record of such a thing being done; but it is known that one of Mary's ladies had a relative at Fotheringay at the time of the execution, and that he was an artist. It is also known that the Queen's body lay in one of the rooms of the castle for some hours before it was embalmed, and there is therefore a likelihood that this artist managed to paint the portrait during this interval between the execution and the autopsy, as

At last the executioner laid Mary Stuart's head beside her body, and her faithful servants rushed upon the scaffold and gathered up her prayer-book and crucifix as priceless relics; Jane Kennedy, remembering the little dog, called him softly and sought for him everywhere—but he had disappeared. A few moments later, as the executioner was untying the Queen's garters he spied the poor little creature cowering beneath her petticoat and pulled him from his hiding-place, but the terrified animal escaped from his grasp and took refuge between his dead mistress' shoulders and her head, which had been deposited beside her body, where he crouched whining pitifully. Despite his efforts to escape Jane Kennedy then secured him, and the order to clear the hall having been given, she carried him away all stained with the Queen's blood.

a memento for his kinswoman of her beloved mistress. It is natural that he should not have depicted the Queen with the gray hair which was unfamiliar to all her people, but have represented her in the auburn wig with which she habitually covered it, which she actually wore at her execution, and which fell off when the headsman lifted her head for the assemblage to see, and which may still be seen in a collection of historical curiosities in France. There is about this portrait an air of verisimilitude and a weird beauty that impress the beholder strangely.

Bourgoin and Gervais remained after the others and entreated Sir Amyas Paulet to allow them to remove the Queen's heart, so that they could carry it to France as they had promised her, but they were roughly refused and driven from the hall, all the doors of which were closed and bolted, leaving the corpse and the executioner together.

Brantome affirms that the following infamous proceedings then took place:

The corpse was roughly divested of its clothing, carried to the room in which the Queen's trial had been held, and there laid upon the very table around which her judges had sat, where it lay, covered with a coarse black cloth, until two o'clock in the afternoon, when Mr. Walters, a surgeon from the village of Fotheringay, and Mr. Nater, a physician from Stanford, came to embalm it. This they did indifferently well in the presence of Sir Amyas Paulet and his soldiers, without the slightest consideration for the rank or sex of the hapless creature, whose body was thus brutally exposed to the gaze of all who chose to look upon it. This indignity did not, however, accomplish the purpose of the venomous creature who instigated it; it had been reported that the Queen's

legs were swollen and that she was dropsical, but those who witnessed the embalming were obliged to confess that the body of a maiden in the flower of youth could not be more spotless and beautiful than Mary Stuart's, as she lay dead by violence after nineteen years of suffering and captivity.

The autopsy showed the spleen to be in a healthy condition, the lungs yellowish in spots, and the brain a sixth larger than the average size of that organ in women of the same age: everything promised long life to her whose days had been so unjustly curtailed.

The work of embalming completed and a report of the proceedings signed, the Queen's body was laid in a lead coffin, which was enclosed in a wooden one, and was left lying upon the table until the first of August, 1586—five months after the execution—and during all that time no one was allowed to go near it. When it was discovered that Mary's unhappy servants, who were still detained at Fotheringay, were in the habit of stealing to the door and gazing through the keyhole at the coffin which contained all that remained of their beloved mistress, Sir Amyas Paulet caused

the aperture to be closed, so that even that poor comfort was denied them.

Within an hour after the tragedy was enacted, Henry Talbot, who was among those present, set out at full speed for London, carrying to Elizabeth the welcome intelligence of her rival's death. True to her character, Elizabeth displayed the utmost grief and rage, drove her favorites from her with violent indignation, claiming that her orders had been misunderstood and that they had been over-zealous. She sent Davison to the Tower, from which prison he was finally released by paying an immense fine which completely ruined him. But in the midst of this poignant grief Elizabeth took care to place an embargo upon every port in England, and thus hindered the news of Mary's execution from getting abroad until she could put a favorable coloring upon the outrageous deed; nor did her regret cause her to suppress the scandalous fêtes which celebrated the terrible act in London, or to extinguish the bonfires which were kindled all over her capital. Not the slightest effort was made to induce the public to pay some respect to the memory of her victim, and public excitement rose to such a pitch that when the

bonfires in the neighborhood of the French Embassy lacked fuel a mob forced the doors and carried furniture from the building to feed the flames.

Alarmed at such lawlessness, M. de Chateauneuf was still barricaded in the embassy, when, a fortnight after Mary's execution, he was invited to visit Elizabeth at the Archbishop of Canterbury's country seat. He went there with the fixed determination not to say one word regarding what had occurred; but as soon as he appeared, Elizabeth, who was dressed in deep mourning, rose and went to meet him; she overwhelmed him with kindness and told him that she was prepared to place all her available troops at the service of his master, Henri III., to assist him in crushing the League.

M. de Chateauneuf received all her offers with a stern, cold air, persevering in his intention of making no reference to the sad event which had caused them both to don mourning garb; but Elizabeth taking his hand, drew him aside, and pointing to her black gown said, with a heavy sigh:

"Ah, Monsieur, since we last met a great and terrible misfortune has befallen me; I refer to the death of my good sister, the Queen of Scotland,

and upon my soul's salvation I declare that I am innocent of it. I signed the warrant, it is true, but I never intended it to be executed, and some of my council played a trick upon me, for which they should atone with their heads, had they not served me so many years. I have a woman's body, monsieur, but a man's heart."

The ambassador bowed without replying; but his letter to Henri III., and the latter's response, proved that neither of them was ever duped by this female Tiberius.

For five months the Queen's unfortunate servants were held in captivity at Fotheringay, and the disfigured body lay there awaiting burial. Elizabeth claimed that this condition of affairs existed because she required time to arrange for the grand funeral she intended giving her "good sister Mary," but the truth was that she dare not have the public, royal burial follow so close upon the secret and infamous execution, and desired to postpone the obsequies until the reports she had circulated were generally accredited before the real truth should be known from the lips of Mary's retainers. She hoped that when the world had formed an opinion regarding Mary Stuart's death,

it would be too indifferent to change it, and that time and current events would efface the interest which Catholic princes took in her fate; so it was not until jailers and prisoners were completely worn out that, having been officially informed that the poorly embalmed body could be kept no longer, she at last commanded that the funeral should take place.

On the first day of August tailors and dress-makers, sent by Elizabeth, arrived at Fotheringay laden with black materials and charged to provide all the dead Queen's household with mourning; Mary's servants, however, declined their services, for, not anticipating such generosity on the part of the Queen of England, they had, at their own expense, donned mourning immediately after their mistress' death.

At eight o'clock in the evening of the eighth of August, a funeral car, covered with black velvet and adorned with small banners embroidered in gold with the arms of Scotland, which were the Queen's, and of Aragon, which were Darnley's, and drawn by four horses with sable trappings, appeared before the gates of Fotheringay Castle. It was followed by the King-at-arms and twenty

mounted gentlemen, with their squires and lackeys, all dressed in deep mourning; the King-at-arms dismounted and, conducted by Sir Amyas Paulet, went with his whole suite to the hall where the body lay and caused the coffin to be carried down and placed on the car, the whole party being bareheaded and preserving profound silence during the entire proceeding.

This transaction excited the prisoners greatly, and they counselled together as to the propriety of requesting permission to attend the body of their mistress, on the ground that they could not bear to have it depart unattended by any of her household, but as they were about to send and request an interview with the King-at-arms, that dignitary entered the room where they were assembled, and informed them that he was charged by his august mistress, the Queen of England, to do honor to the late Queen of Scotland with the most magnificent funeral possible. He said that not wishing to fail in the fulfilment of so important a mission, he had already completed most of the arrangements for the ceremony which was to take place on the tenth, and that, the lead casket which enclosed the corpse being very heavy, he

had judged wisest to take it that night to the tomb which was already prepared instead of waiting until the day of the funeral, but that if any of them desired to follow their mistress' body and see what disposition was made of it, they were free to do so, also that it was Queen Elizabeth's express desire that all of them should be present at the funeral ceremony.

This assurance eased the minds of the captives and they deputed Bourgoin, Gervais, Andrew Melvill, Stewart, Gorgon, Howard, Lauder, and Nicolas Delamarre to follow their mistress.

The procession left Fotheringay at ten o'clock, Mary's servants walking behind the car, which was preceded by the King-at-arms and his suite, accompanied by footmen carrying torches; they reached Peterborough at two o'clock in the morning and marched directly to the beautiful old Saxon cathedral where Catherine of Aragon was buried. They found the edifice hung with black and the nave ornamented with banners bearing the arms of Scotland and Aragon. In the centre of the choir a structure was erected in the style of a *chapelle ardente*, but without lighted candles; it was covered with black velvet, embroidered with the arms

of Stuart and Darnley, and a resting-place for the pall was prepared beneath it; the bier was covered with black velvet, fringed with silver, and upon it was a pillow covered with the same material on which lay a sceptre and crown.

To the right of the bier, and facing Catherine of Aragon's sepulchre, a grave had been prepared for Mary of Scotland; it was of brick and so constructed that it could be covered later with a marble slab, or a monument be built over it. The Bishop of Peterborough, arrayed in his episcopal robes and accompanied by his Dean and minor clergy, awaited the arrival of the body at the cathedral door and preceded it as it was borne into the church, and in profound silence, without prayer or hymn, the coffin was lowered into the grave. As soon as it was in place masons filled in the grave to the level of the surrounding pavement, leaving only an aperture a foot and a half in length which they closed with an iron grating, the bars of which permitted one to look down upon the casket, and would later permit the broken staves of office, the banners and insignia to fall upon it, as was then customary at the obsequies of royal personages.

When this nocturnal ceremony was at an end, Bourgoin, Melvill, and their companions were conducted to the episcopal residence, where all those appointed to attend the final obsequies were to assemble. Three hundred and fifty persons, all of whom, with the exception of Mary's servants, had been selected from the officers of justice, nobility, gentry, and Protestant clergy, were to be present at the funeral service.

On the ninth of August the banquet-hall of the palace was hung with splendid black-and-silver drapery, and elaborate preparations were made for the entertainment of those who had been invited to attend the funeral rites of the victim of Elizabeth's jealousy. Bourgoin and Melvill frequently had their attention called to the costly and imposing arrangements made for their Queen's funeral, which bore witness to Elizabeth's respect for her and regret for her untimely death; convinced that they had been permitted to take part in these pompous proceedings rather that they might witness the magnificence of England's Queen, than to afford them the satisfaction of witnessing their mistress' interment, Mary's luckless servants showed but little pleasure in this ostentatious display.

On Friday, the tenth of August, all those deputed to attend the obsequies having assembled at the palace, they formed in procession according to rank and marched to the cathedral; on entering the edifice Bourgoin and the others took the places assigned them in the choir and the choristers began to chant the funeral service of the Episcopal Church, but when the old physician saw that the service was not to be performed by Catholic priests he rose and left the church, declaring he would not be a party to such an insult to his Queen; he was followed by all Mary's servants except Melvill and Maubray, who reasoned that in whatever tongue prayers were uttered they would be heard above.

The assemblage were greatly scandalized by the action of the dead Queen's people, but the Bishop, nevertheless, preached an eloquent funeral sermon; when it was ended the King-at-arms sought out Bourgoin and his companions, who were walking in the cloisters, and informed them that holy communion was about to be celebrated and invited them to take part in the service, but they responded that they were Catholics and could not partake of the sacrament at an altar of which they did not approve.

Much annoyed that the ceremonies should be marred by their conduct, the King-at-arms returned to the church, but after a little he sent word that the religious services were ended, and requested them to return and be present at the royal ceremonies, which pertained to no religion; this, after a few minutes' hesitation, they agreed to do, but when they arrived the staves of office were already broken and with the banners lay upon their mistress' coffin, and workmen were reparing to set the slab which closed the grave.

The procession then returned to the Bishop's palace, where a sumptuous funeral banquet was spread. By a strange freak, Elizabeth, who had punished the living like a criminal, heaped royal honors upon the dead, and had commanded that Mary's faithful servants should be the guests of honor at this mortuary feast; but they did not appreciate her tardy kindness and were neither astonished by the magnificence of the appointments nor cheered by the rich fare; tears choked them, and they were scarcely able to respond to the questions asked them, and the attentions lavished upon them.

When the feast was over they asked permission

to return to Fotheringay, where they were at last informed that they were at liberty to go whithersoever they chose. Feeling their lives were in danger so long as they were on English soil, they hastily collected their belongings and took their departure from Fotheringay Castle on foot on Monday, August 13, 1587.

Christian though he was, Bourgoin could not forgive Elizabeth for the suffering she had inflicted upon his beloved Queen; he was the last to leave the castle, and when he reached the further side of the drawbridge he turned about and shook his clenched fist at the regicide walls, repeating in a loud and solemn voice the words of David:

"O Lord, give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavors; give them according to the work of their hands, render to them their deserts."

The old man's prayer was heard, for Elizabeth died an unloved and unhappy woman, and impartial history has condemned her.

We remarked that the headsman's axe, when it imbedded itself in Mary Stuart's skull, caused her crucifix and prayerbook to fall from her hands and that they were picked up by some of her suite.

We cannot say what has become of the crucifix, but the book is in the Bibliothèque Royale, where it can be seen by those who are interested in historic souvenirs. Its authenticity is vouched for by two certificates, which we quote; they are inscribed upon one of the fly-leaves of the volume.

First Certificate.

We, the undersigned, supérieur vicaire de l'étroit observance of the Order of Cluny, certify that this book was delivered to us by the order of the late Don Michel Nardin, a priest of our said order, who departed this life at our College of St. Martial of Avignon, on the twenty-eighth of March, 1723, aged eighty years, thirty of which he passed among us, leading a life of exemplary piety; he was a German by birth, and served a long time as an officer in that army. He was admitted at Cluny and took orders there, having laid aside all thought of worldly possessions and honors; with the permission of the Superior he retained possession of this book only, knowing it to have been in constant use by Mary Stuart, Queen of England and Scotland, up to the end of her life. Before death separated him from his brethren, he requested that this book, in order that it might surely reach us, should be sent to us by post in a sealed

package. In the same shape in which we have received it, we have requested M. l'Abbé Bignon, Councillor of State and Royal Librarian, to accept this precious souvenir of the piety of a Queen of England and a German officer of her faith and ours.

(Signed) Frère Gérard Poncet,
Supérieur Vicaire Général.

Second Certificate.

We, Jean Paul Bignon, Royal Librarian, are very glad of the opportunity to demonstrate our zeal for the religion by placing this manuscript in his Majesty's library.

(Signed) Jean Pierre Bignon.
July 8th, 1721.

This book, upon which the last glance of the unfortunate Queen of Scotland rested, is a duodecimo, written in Gothic characters and containing Latin prayers; it is embellished with gilt miniatures in relief representing devotional subjects, scenes from sacred history or from the lives of the saints and martyrs. Each page is bordered by an arabesque in which garlands of flowers and fruits are mingled and from which grotesque faces of men and animals peep out. The binding, which

is now much worn, consists of a black velvet cover whose flat sides have, in the centre, enamelled pansies entangled in catkins of silver; two twisted and knotted silver-gilt cords, finished at either end with tassels, extend diagonally from corner to corner of the cover.

Copy of the last will, and of a memoir of the late Queen, Mary Stuart, Queen of Scotland and Dowager of France, taken from the originals, written and signed with the Queen's own hand, the one on the day before and the other on the very day of her death, which occurred February 8th, 1587:

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost:

I, Mary, by the grace of God Queen of Scotland and Dowager of France, being prepared to die and being unable to make my will, do commit my last wishes to writing, intending and wishing that they may have the same force and effect as if they were put in proper form.

I declare that I die in the Catholic, Apostolic, Roman faith.

In the first place I wish that a full service should be performed for the repose of my soul in the church of St. Denis in Paris, and another at

St. Peter's at Rheims, at which all my servants may be present, in such manner as I have given instructions to those who have the matter in charge.

Also, that a yearly obit shall be founded, that prayers may be said for my soul forever in such place and manner as shall be deemed most suitable. To provide therefore, I desire my houses at Fontainebleau to be sold, trusting that, in addition thereto, the King will assist herein, as he is requested in my memoir.

I desire my estate of Trespagny to pass to my cousin, the Duke of Guise, for one of his daughters if she should be married. I will remit half or a part, of the arrearages due me on condition that the residue be paid, to be employed by my executors in perpetual alms. The better to effect this result the papers should be found, so that legal proceedings may be instituted.

I desire, also, that the proceeds of my Secondat litigation be distributed as follows:

First, in payment of my debts and obligations hereafter mentioned.

First of all, Curl's two thousand crowns, which I wish paid him without demur, as they were to have been given him upon his marriage, nor can Nane, nor any other, demand any portion of it from him, whatever obligations he may hold, for it is only a pretence, and the money was mine and not

borrowed; I simply caused it to be shown to him and then withdrew it, and it was afterward taken from me with the rest. I give him Charteloy, if he can recover it, in payment of the four thousand crowns promised at my death, and a thousand for the marriage of one of his sisters, and because he asked me for the rest of his expenses while in prison. As for the assignment of a like sum to Nane, it is not obligatory and it has always been my intention that he should be the last paid, and then only if nothing should appear to have been done contrary to the conditions on which I promised them to him, as my servants will bear witness. As for the twelve hundred crowns which he borrowed for my service, six hundred from Beauregard, three hundred from Gervais, and the rest I know not where, he must repay them from his purse, and I be released therefrom and the obligation cancelled, for I received none of it and the whole is now in his coffers if they are not already paid. However that may be, that sum must be restored to me intact as I have had none of it, and if it was paid I ought to have recourse as to my own property; and I also desire that Pasquier shall account for the sums he had received, and expended at Nane's bidding, through the hands of M. de Châteauneuf, the French ambassador's servants.

I desire that my accounts be audited and my

treasurer paid; also, that the wages and portions of my people, for the past year as well as the present, should all be paid before anything else, pensions as well as wages (except Nane's and Curl's pensions) as far as it is possible to know what is coming to them, and what they have deserved at my hands in the way of pensions, unless Curl's wife is in necessitous circumstances, or is persecuted on my account; the same as to Nane's wages.

I desire that the twenty-four hundred francs I have given Jane Kennedy shall be paid her in silver, as was provided in her first gift, whereby the pension of Volley (*sic*) Douglas will revert to me, which I give to Fontenay for his services and expenses, as yet unrewarded.

I desire that the four thousand crowns should be solicited and collected from the banker whose name I have now forgotten—but the Bishop of Glasgow will remember it—and if the first assignment is missing I desire that one should be given upon the first avails of Secondat. The ten thousand francs which the Ambassador has received for me I wish divided among my servants who are now leaving me, namely:

Two thousand francs to my physician.

Two thousand to Elspeth Curle.

Two thousand to Sébastian Paiges.

Two thousand to Marie Paiges, my goddaughter.

One thousand francs to Beauregard.

One thousand to Gorjon.

One thousand to Gervais.

From the avails of my income and the residue from Secondat, and from all miscellaneous sources, I wish five thousand crowns to be employed in charity among the children of Rheims.

To my schoolmates, two thousand francs.

To the four beggars, such sum as may seem proper to my executors according to the means they have at hand.

To my chief cook, Martin, I give a thousand francs.

A thousand francs to Annibal, and I bequeath him to his godfather, my cousin, de Guise, that he may give him some place in his household for life.

I leave five hundred francs to Nicolas, and five hundred for his daughters when they marry.

I leave five hundred francs to Robert Hamilton, and beg my son to take him, or his Grace of Glasgow, or the Bishop of Ross.

I leave to Didier his clerkship, subject to the King's favor. I give five hundred francs to Jean Lauder, and beg my cousins, de Guise or de Maine, to take him into their service, their graces of Glasgow and Ross to see that he is provided for. I desire his father's wages to be paid, and I leave him five hundred francs.

I desire that a thousand francs be paid to Gor-

jon to reimburse him for money and other things furnished me in time of need.

I desire, if Bourgoin make the pilgrimage to St. Nicolas, which he has undertaken to make for me, that fifteen hundred francs be paid him on that account.

I leave six thousand francs to the Bishop of Glasgow and three thousand to him of Ross, said sums being apportioned according to my limited means.

I leave my miscellaneous properties and seignorial rights to my godson, M. du Ruysseau's son.

I give three thousand francs to Laurenz.

Also three thousand francs to Suzanne.

I leave ten thousand francs to be distributed among the four who become sureties for me to the solicitor, Varmy.

I desire that the proceeds from the sale of the furniture, which I have ordered to be sold at London, be applied to defray the expenses of my servants' journey to France.

I leave my coach and horses to be used for the transportation of my maids, or to be sold as is most convenient to them.

There are about a hundred crowns of salary due Bourgoin for previous years, and I wish them to be paid him.

I leave two thousand francs to Melvill, my steward.

I appoint my cousin, the Duke de Guise, chief executor of my will.

After him the Bishop of Glasgow, the Bishop of Ross, and M. de Rysseau, his chancellor.

It is my purpose that Le Préau shall continue to enjoy his two prebends.

I commend my goddaughter, Marie Paiges, to my cousin, Madame de Guise, and beg her to take her into her service, and my aunt, Madame de Saint-Pierre, to find some good place for Mowbray, or to retain her in her own service, for the honor of God.

Done this 7th day of February, 1587,

And signed, MARIE, Queen.

MEMOIR

Or the last request which I make of the King, Henry III. of France. To pay me both what he owes me on account of my pensions and the money advanced by the late Queen, my mother, in Scotland, for the service of the King, my father-in-law, in his kingdom, or at least so much thereof as will found an obit for the repose of my soul, and provide for the alms and trifling endowments promised by me.

Also that he will be pleased to permit my Dowager's jointure to be paid a year after my death in order that my servants may be paid.

Also, if he so please to allow them to receive

their wages and pensions during their lives, as was done in the case of the Queen Eléanor's officers.

I also beg him to receive my physician into his service as he promised, and to hold him in esteem.

Also, that my chaplain may be restored to his profession, and, for my sake, provided with some small living where he may pray God for my soul during the remainder of his life.

Also, that Didier, an old retainer of my cuisine, to whom I have given a clerkship as a recompense, may be permitted to enjoy it for the remainder of his days, he being already well advanced in years.

Done on the morning of my death, Wednesday, February 8th, 1587.

And signed, MARIE, Queen.

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